1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

it, then digs a hole, puts in the image, and buries it. It is left there and starts to swell up. As soon as it does so noticeably, the rain starts.

Another method is to take a pile of dangi bark (used for poisoning fish) and beat it thoroughly with a stone. Large armfuls of green grass are then gathered, the dangi is placed inside of the grass, and all of it tied in a bundle. Stones are then placed on top of the grass, and the bundle is carried out into the sea or fresh water to the height of a man's shoulders and dropped. The man then comes up out of the water and sings the sound of rain falling and pushes the water with his hand, which causes it to splash as though rain were falling in it. He says, "In three days there will be clouds and in four days there will be rain."

The bundle can also be made into a human image, which can be and usually is given the name of the maker.

If one wants the rain to cease, the grass is taken out and thrown about so that it will dry, and the rain then stops. If it continues to such an extent that a huge flood sweeps down from the bush country a very powerful medicine man may dive into the flood water, catch the offending sacred python who is causing the flood, and send him back into his water house, which causes the waters to recede. A few years ago a tremendous flood came down the Buckingham River and went higher and higher until the people climbed the highest trees with their babies and dogs. The flood came still higher and faster, and finally it knocked some of the children, dogs, and babies, and a few of the older people into the water and drowned them. Warlumbopo, the Ritarngo medicine man, with the help of his familiars, dived in the water and caught Muit, the totemic python, pulled him back, and sent him down into the well again. The rain stopped and the flood ceased. Only medicine men understand how to do this.

Murngin believe they cannot stop rain if it comes by itself. Sometimes they think that it has been caused by people in other countries performing the magic. Nothing can be done about it unless the people themselves take the proper methods to stop the magic from working.

THE MURNGIN PHARMACOPOEIA

The Murngin do not depend entirely upon magic for curing their ills and ills. They have a fairly extensive pharmacopoeia which includes both animal and plant remedies. Each illness has a special treatment applied to it. If a sick man has been treated with herbs he can also

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

in the water hole; because of this, the women and their children were swallowed by Yurlunggur, the python. A great flood covered the land, after which the two women were regurgitated and finally swallowed again. 773

The myth has three primary and ten secondary movements. The first principal movement can be called "the coming of the two sisters from the southern interior"; the second, "the python's pool is profaned and he swallows the Wawilak women"; and the last, "man learns the secrets of the Wawilak rituals."

The Murngin unquestionably associate the Wawilak myth generally with the four ceremonies. The following statement by a Liaalaomir old man summarizes what I heard probably hundreds of times: "Those two old Wawilak women made the garmas [not all of them], and Djungguan, Gunabibi, Ulmark, and Marndiella for the Liaalaomir and Mandelpui people"; or, as it was sometimes expressed, "This Gunabibi and Ulmark, Djunguan, and Marndiella are all the Wawilak story. They belong to Mirrirmina [clan well of the Liaalaomir], where those two old women found the snake. Marndiella is the same as a garma [i.e., it is a less sacred ceremony than the others] because it belongs more to the women's camp." I was told by many that all people believe that Muit (one of the sacred names of the python) caused the wet and dry season and that "the Wawilak women sang all the songs and dances [the four ceremonies mentioned above] to stop the rain and to stop the snakes who had surrounded them." [824]

In one account I was given of the Wawilak Creation myth, "She [the older sister] sang the 'outside songs' when we cut young men. After she finished them she sang all the Djungguan songs and the Gunabibi songs. All the time she was trying to stop this rain but it wouldn't stop—she sang the 'inside' song of Djungguan—a-a-a—kak-yel—; she sang the songs where the subsection names are called out and the men sit in a circle, and she called out the clan names for the first time."

The young sister sang like the leaders do now, with a singing stick. That young girl said, "We will take the Yiritja way now." The rain did not stop and it got harder. They tried to sing something more "inside" (i.e., more sacred). "And they sang Yurlunggur [another name for the sacred python] and menstruation blood and this is the same as when the boys bring Yurlunggur in at night to the circle." (See Djungguan ceremony, page 270.) 773 796

The story of the two Wawilak women is always told when any one

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929)1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

The Wawilak Configuration and the Seasonal Cycle

821 Throughout the native interpretation in which the Wawilak myth
773 and the four rituals are connected point by point and integrated, there is a continual association of the rain and flood with the python which gives us a clue to the wider meaning of the python symbol to the Murngin. The Murngin definitely associate the Wawilak python with the weather and seasonal change. The climatic ideas which surround the python are not latent but conscious and manifest in Murngin thinking. Here we shall examine the python as a weather symbol.

132 The outstanding general natural phenomena are the great seasonal changes which produce heavy rainfall and floods for five months, and for seven months an extremely dry season in which there is no rain and many of the streams, lakes, water holes and inlets dry up. Correlated with this cycle of rainy and dry seasons are the attendant phenomena of changing winds and clouds, greater and less heat, growth and decay of vegetation, birth and growth of the different species of animals, and the appearance of certain birds and insects and the disappearance of others. There is constant need of drastic change in the adaptation of the Murngin economics and technology to fit the constantly changing natural environment.

133 The other fundamental natural phenomenon which is always dramatically before one's eyes is the relation of the land to the ocean, tidal lakes, and rivers. The great tides pour inland for scores of miles, reaching into the flat coastal plains which stretch back to the broken and difficult highlands in the interior. The flat coast land is continuous along the Sea of Arafura and the Gulf of Carpentaria.

823 The Murngin have a most accurate knowledge of the locational, seasonal, and daily variation of the tides. Anyone who has taken a canoe trip with them along the seacoast quickly learns that this knowledge is immense in detail, well organized, and held by all the men. To the Murngin mind the flow of the tide into the Murngin land stands in opposition to the flow of the rivers, particularly at flood time during the rainy season. The reason is obvious when we realize the great heights of the incoming tide and the tremendous flow of flood water which goes to the sea during the rainy season.

133 The central plain which extends from thirty-five to sixty miles in-
134 land at sea level is composed of Tertiary deposits which have produced a very poor soil. Inland the altitude increases from several hundred to a thousand feet. Arnhem Land's highest point (to the west and
000 south of the Murngin) is said to be only 1500 feet high. Because of

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929)1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

132 The Wawilak myth among other things symbolizes[a] the cycle of
173 the rainy and dry seasons. Evidence will be presented to show that the
82 great python is the rainy season and that associated with this symbol

[132]

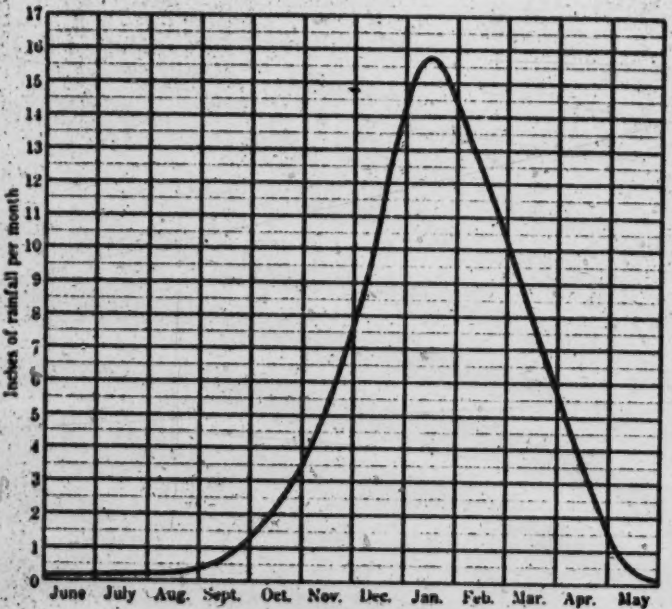

CHART XI.—RAIN CHART FOR PORT DARWIN (46-YEAR RECORD).

almost daily. They come up in a dense black bank, and travel so very rapidly that they are generally out of sight on the western horizon within 30 minutes. About an inch, or sometimes more, of heavy driving rain accompanies each storm; but in the year 1871 the writer of this article saw 2¼ inches of rain gauged within ten minutes during one of these squalls.

"During December the N.W. monsoon gradually gains the ascendancy and blows steadily, with an occasional break of calm weather. The thunderstorms disappear, the sky becomes overcast and clouded, and the atmosphere gets thoroughly saturated with moisture—so much so that leather-work becomes green with mildew; if not constantly attended to, the binding of books becomes soft; and sugar or salt, if exposed in an open vessel, will soon liquefy. This is felt to be an agreeable change after the intensely hot weather during the change of the monsoon in October and November; and, although the humid, moist atmosphere induces profuse perspiration, the effects of the weather are not nearly so unpleasant or severe as those attending the dry heat experienced in the southern portion of Australia during the same and two succeeding months.

"The N.W. monsoon is accompanied by rain almost daily, and increases in force until the latter end of January or beginning of February, when it is blowing in full heart, and penetrates with its copious and fertilizing showers into the very centre of Australia. During this period thick, damp weather prevails, the clouds being very low, and scud and banks of nimbus pass over almost constantly from the N.W. to the S.E.

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

is the belief in an original flood which covered the earth and, to the Murngin, was a prototype of the modern great floods that yearly inundate the countries of their clans and force them for their own safety into the high grounds, and at times even into the trees on the high grounds.

The west and northwest wind (rainy season winds) is called Barra. "Barra is Dua, it belongs to the same moiety as the snake and is sent by the snake," said the leader of one of the Dua clans to me. In other accounts it is said to be the snake. "Barra wind only brings nothing but rain and flood. After awhile that rain brings fish in the lakes and rivers and makes the grass grow up for bandicoot to eat and the tree flowers for flying-fox and opossum and plenty of fresh tucker [vegetable food] for black men. When the stringy bark comes it is Dua time."

The west wind brings grass and flood and holds until the trees flower, when the wind changes and comes from the north. Then all the people start looking for bush tucker, and, to continue with the native comment, "Dua rain and wind bring the wet season [mai-elng-nga, no-food time]. The west-wind part is first and it is the largest part."

The dry-season monsoon comes from the southeast, and for the natives northwest of those on the Gulf of Carpentaria, it is a land wind. The dry season is called Gu-tjer-a, and the southeast wind is known as Di-mur-u. "That Dimuru brings plenty tucker and yam and other bush food. There is plenty of fish in the billibongs and plenty sea birds' eggs and yams and all kinds of plums. When the plums finish the wind goes back to Barra [northwest monsoon]. The rain

with great rapidity. The maximum temperature in the shade during the day in this weather is 96°, and the minimum during the night is 65°.

"On the approach of the autumn equinox the N.W. monsoon gradually dies away, and is succeeded by the calms, variable winds, thunderstorms, and oppressive weather until about the end of April, when cooler weather is felt; the S.E. monsoon sets in, and the dry season may be said to have fairly commenced. The wind is characterized by a clear sky, enjoyable weather, heavy dews, and cold mornings and nights—so much so that blankets can be used when sleeping. It blows off the coast without intermission, and with great force, almost throughout the season, being in full heart between June and July. At Port Darwin and other places adjacent to the coast, the monsoon generally drops in the afternoon, and is sometimes succeeded by a sea breeze, which is merely local, and only extends to a few miles inland. The atmosphere is clear and dry, and rather hot during the middle of the day—the maximum temperature in the day being 89° and the minimum during the night 56°."

[8] See social organization, technology and the various rituals which are connected with this myth.

1: Warner E-5 (1926–1929)1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

821 805

clouds are Dua and those lines of clouds that come from the west are Dua.

"The north wind blows and the weather can be wet or dry. It is Yiritja. This is also the time of the wind from the south. When black clouds appear [on the horizon] and Yiritja lightning comes from them, it is when the crocodile makes his nest and lays his eggs and the sting ray appears. It is Yiritja time now."

When the inland lakes dry up and the small streams disappear and many of the clan water holes are empty, "the thunder comes then and calls out for the rain." This is Raer-un-daer, the intermediate period between the dry season and the wet. The clouds from which thunder comes are called kur-ka (penis or male) mo-la-ma (cloud); they come from the south and east. A little later gur-ding gur-ding (the "woman cloud") comes from the west. "Those two meet and copulate." When this happens the "Snakes on the ground ["tucker ones"] put their tails together and copulate. Great mobs of the snakes do this."

"The inside meaning of those clouds is all the same as the snakes. They are snakes."

"The rainbow comes then [bar-i-el-la, light; ba-pi, snake]."[4]

821 776

The rainbow is sometimes seen as the python totem itself, at other times it is the house of the snake, and at still others the totemic trumpet. Since it is believed that when the Yurlunggur trumpet is made for the circumcision initiation the snake is inside, it follows that if the rainbow is the snake's house it is also the trumpet. "That one is a snake, he is also the snake's house. Bariella shows all the people that they have to get their houses ready, and when we see this each one starts making his house."

It was because the Wawilak men, who came after the snake had swallowed the women, saw the rainbow in the Mirrirmina pool that they knew the snake was inside the water hole. To the Murngin the rainbow is an announcement not only of heavy rains but also of the heavy floods at the height of the rainy season.

The rain is believed to be Yurlunggur himself or his saliva, with which he licked his two Wawilak victims and their children before he swallowed them. "The rain," said one of the leaders of the Liaalaomir clan, "is all the same as Muit's spit, or he can send it by his voice [thunder]. He can tell it to come." The oldest leader of the Liaalaomir clan, Dorng [thunder], said, "That big fellow, Bapa Indi, he is our father. Down here we call him Wirtit [common name for

[4] Cf. Radcliffe-Brown, A. R., *The Rainbow Serpent Myth of Australia.*

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

the ordinary rock python]. Bapa Indi makes the rain. Rain is all the same as our brother."

Snails and caterpillars are classed as snakes by the Murngin and, although I did not attempt to get an explicit statement on certain types of grubs, I believe they are also placed in this same category; at least they are always associated with snakes. "Snail is all the same as snake. He comes out just before the rainy season. The inside meaning for that snail is the wet season." Modern Murngin women start hunting snails for food with their marl-pin-pin (snail) sticks at this time of the year.

There are two kinds of lightning. One, ordinary heat lightning, is supposed to be Yiritja; a native compared it to the light from my flashlight because it spread out and diffused evenly. Forked lightning that comes with the roar of thunder is Dua. Yurlunggur's voice is his warro (soul, shadow, or reflection). He said to those two Wawilak women, "People by and by will call my warro, bapi [snake]. When that lightning comes it is all the same as daylight, and thunder sings out in a heavy roar. Dua lightning is the forked tongue of the snake, and the thunder is the roar of the snake. That storm [see myth] and thunder were from that snake, and he was after those two Wawilak women—those two women tried to stop that snake's tongue. He wanted to swallow them. Those Dua rain clouds [see myth] bring rain. Those two women tried to stop that rain because the water came like a flood and tried to cover them all up. That is all the same as that snake swallowing them. The women tried to stop the snake because he was the flood and the wet season covering the earth."

The Great Python, Yurlunggur or Muit, is sometimes seen as the rain itself but is usually associated with or considered identical with the flood. The flood referred to in their thinking is either the great inundation that covered the earth as told in the Wawilak myth or those that come yearly.

Generally Yurlunggur is associated with the totality of the wet season. He is recognized as such by the clansmen of both moieties over the entire area. The degree of a person's philosophical and theological insight into his meanings depends largely on the individual and his social personality. An intelligent, alert Murngin will know most of the evidence recorded here in the native statements. On the other hand, a stupid one would know a few of them and understand the generalities. Muit or Yurlunggur is man and woman, but he is thought of as male. The splitting of the python into two sexual parts, a male

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929)1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

821 776 individual and a female, is made when the totems are put into the category of natural phenomena; and since it is the nature of snakes on earth to be male and female and have young as man and all other creatures do, it is obvious to the Murngin that the totemic snakes are the same as any species. One of the clan leaders said to me, "The children are little Muits. They live here on the earth or with their father in the sky or with him in the waters down below the earth. Their children are true wirtits [actual snakes—thus the connection between the snake species and the snake totem is complete]. It is the little Muits who swallow a man or woman when they do some unclean thing such as a woman's getting into a canoe while menstruating. It is Muit who makes the rain." This account I think is less generally expressed and believed among the larger group because it is too well rationalized and bears the mark of a ritual leader and more intelligent person; yet it would be accepted by any Murngin if it were expressed to him by a leader.

821 776 825 The following would be generally known and was told to me numerous times during ceremonies or when the weather was being discussed: "The wet and dry seasons are caused by the snakes. During the wet the snakes curl up and have sexual intercourse; the Great Father Snake does the same. They then come out of the water and want to lay their eggs. This brings on the dry season so that they can have such a place. By and by this causes the heavy floods of the wet season."

821 776 773 It is believed that if, through any ritually impure act, the Wongar totem snake should be angered, he would come out and swallow the earth, and a flood would come at the same time. Several men said to me in effect what I now quote from one man: "If any Wongar snake would swallow us now the flood water would come like it did for the Wawilak sisters and cover all this land.—That snake brought the flood and the rain at the same time when he pushed the stone out of the bottom of the Mirrirmina well." Another time I was told, "When that snake took the stone from the bottom of the well the water came and the snake at the same time. He blew up to the sky for rain." Some versions say he spit water from Mirrirmina, and others say, "He spit at the same time he blew his breath."

At a moment in the Ulmark the leader said to me, "Those Wawilak women sang all night to stop Muit and stop the rain and water. They are all the same thing."

Lightning "is all the same as my brother," a Dua man said to me.

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

"When the lightning comes that means a light for Wongar [the totemic spirit] to see by when he makes that big noise [the thunder] and hits down at those people he fought [the Wawilak sisters in the myth]. When rainbow time comes that is the snake Wongar. He is swallowing those two women. When I see a rainbow or lightning I understand rain is coming." 821 776 773

The cycle of the seasons with the growth and decay of vegetation, copulation, birth and death of animals as well as man, is all the fault of those two Wawilak sisters. "If they hadn't done wrong in their own country and copulated with Dua Wongar men [an incestuous act] and then come down to the Liaalaomir country and menstruated and made that snake wild [angry]," this cycle would never have occurred. "Everyone and all the plants and animals would have walked about by themselves." There would have been no copulation between the sexes and no children and no change. "After they had done this wrong they made it the law for everyone." One of the most intelligent men said to me, "Black men walk about single and by and by catch a mate belong him and by and by yoto [children]. White man walk about by himself, by and by catch mielk and more yoto come out. Macassar man was all the same. Big kangaroo walk about single, by and by he catch a woman and by and by yoto. All the same for opossum and fly and bandicoot and everything." 821 773 776 812

"Snake catchum mate and by and by egg and yoto. All the same for lizard and native companion and bee and turtle and everything.

"Black men cut down trees and by and by little ones come up. Everything is the same everywhere. Walk about single, by and by mate and by and by pickaninny."

This was told me during a Gunabibi as well as other times. It is almost, as far as I could see, a formula in the thinking of the Murngin.

Most of the quotations that have been given were obtained while I observed the Djungguan or Gunabibi and was being told by its leaders the "inside" meaning of each part according to Murngin thought.

The statements of the natives in these last few pages clearly indicate that they are conscious of the symbolism by which they associate the rainy season with the snake or with his actions. The snake at this time comes out of the streams, the lakes, the springs, rivers and wells, which are the sacred totem wells of the Murngin, and as he raises himself the flood rises and the rain starts. He is both in the heavens (the thunder is his voice and the lightning his tongue; the clouds copulate and they are the snakes) and in the subterranean 821 825 773 776

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929)1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

821 825 773 776 depths. When the snake rises and swallows the women the waters c the earth cover the dry land, and the snake does not fall until th southeastern monsoon blows. He falls and the earth is dry again "He was looking for dry land to put [regurgitate] them on." Th rain stops, the waters recede, and the earth dries while the south eastern monsoon blows. In the myth, then, its blowing is the coming of the dry season. The snake falls and regurgitates what he has eaten as do the other snakes. The period of want when little food is avail able is over, for the wet season has "spit up" what it has swallowed in its waters. The women and the other animals swallowed are in this symbolism. The reproductive and "food-giving" parts of nature are by inference—but not, so far as I could determine, in the consciousness of the Murngin—the dry season. The great primeval flood is merely a dramatic enlargement of what takes place every year when the torrential tropical rains flood the lands, cover the earth, and bring want where there was plenty.

THE WAWILAK MYTH AND RITUAL AND MURNGIN SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

821 825 773 852 The "swallowing" of the earth by the rainy season is known to be caused by the wrong actions of the two Wawilak women in copulating incestuously with their own clansmen and by the older sister's later profaning the pool of the sacred python. This is not considered an unmixed calamity, however, because the rain and water bring the plants and bulbs and flowers which are consumed directly by man or provide pasturage for kangaroo, opossum, and other animals eaten by man. In other words, the Murngin see the snake's swallowing the women and animals as necessary and part of the scheme of things, and their testimony clearly demonstrates the causal relation between the actions of the Wawilak women and the seasonal cycle. The cycle of nature is a necessary one, in which man has ordinary and extraordinary rôles to play. In the ordinary rôle he "walks about single, by and by mielk, by and by yoto," as do all the other animals; and in the extraordinary rôle he is pledged by the Wawilak women to continue producing the great rituals because of their original sins and to purify man and his society. These ceremonies are designed to aid nature, or possibly it would be better to say to restrain man from preventing by his unclean actions the coming of the dry season of plenitude. This is why the young man who refuses to copulate with the woman in the fertility rite of the Gunabibi is scolded and told that he will be sick and make his partner ill. And this is why the whole

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

Gunabibi or any of the other ceremonies must be completed; scarcity and sickness are likely to result if it is not.

The snake, then, in this symbolism of nature, is the wet season, and his actions become significant because he swallows the dry season and regurgitates it, which brings a period of plenty.

A number of additional elements to this symbol are suggested by the four myths. The women are swallowed because of their unclean acts. When the various ceremonial elements are listed, the snake is found to be played almost always by the men, and the Wawilak sisters by the women, uninitiated children, and those who are being initiated.

Initiated and uninitiated meet frequently on the border line of the general camp (to which the women are ceremonially restricted) and the men's grounds. At times the men invade the ground of the women. The formal grouping of the women and children and of the initiated men is emphasized by this spatial arrangement.

In all instances the male snake (Bapa Indi, Father Big) is a ritualization of the male section of society, and the Wawilak sisters who by their uncleanness have provoked the snake (men) into swallowing them are the unritualized or profane sections of the tribe, i.e., the women and uninitiated boys. The only exceptions to this generalization occur when men take the rôle of women on the men's ground from which women are barred. This brings us, I think, to a deeper level of the great Murngin rituals. The men's age grade is a snake and purifying element, and the sociological women's group is the unclean group. The male snake-group in the act of swallowing the unclean group "swallows" the initiates into the ritually pure masculine age grade, and at the same time the whole ritual purifies the whole group or tribe.

The snake is the fertilizing principle in nature according to Murngin symbolism; this explains why it is identified with the men's group rather than with the women; otherwise one would suppose that the male principle, being identified with the positive higher social values, would be associated by the Murngin with the dry season—the time of the year of high social value.

Seven institutions found in Murngin society are the elementary family, the extended kinship structure, the tribe, the clan, the moiety, the subsection, and the horde. The tribe and the horde are amorphous unities which have no formal structure. The unstable elementary family and extended kin groups are organized into larger formal unities by the clan, moiety, and subsection systems. The totemic system

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

category, and when man "keeps from being sick" he at the same time keeps nature from being sick. The rituals keep both man and nature well and strong and allow them to reproduce and the fertility cycle of both to continue.

An Analysis of the Ritual Logic of Murngin Totemism

We have now finally reached the point where we can analyze Murngin religious thought, for we have presented in detail, first, the relations of the myths to the rituals; second, the symbolization of the phenomena of nature in myth and ritual; and third, the symbolization of the social organization and its various segments in Murngin ritual. The articulation of these very complex elements of society and nature into a conceptual configuration which is Murngin totemic logic cannot be presented coherently by description alone. It will be necessary to resort to charts.

To delineate properly the logic of Murngin totemism, it is necessary first to examine what the ritual realities are in man's relations to the physical environment of northeastern Arnhem Land. We shall be concerned not so much with the obvious realities of the natural environment as with the social attitudes which man has in relation to the various aspects of this environment; both concepts are comprised in the single statement that nature acts on man and man acts on nature.

The technological behavior of man describes his realistic and logical adjustment to his environment. Within this realm of his behavior his attitudes are entirely logical, and his techniques relate him in a scientific way to nature. It will be necessary to restate a few general facts about the natural world in which the Murngin lives. This world consists of two seasons, a rainy and a dry. Man's adaptation to the former is difficult and his adaptation to the latter is comparatively simple and without effort. The total effects on man of the dry and rainy seasons, socially and physically, are felt as comparative degrees of ill-being and well-being (in behavioristic language, the effects of positive and negative stimuli.)

The Murngin definitely recognize the real relation in nature of the wet and dry seasons, and they understand that the former is necessary to produce the latter. They are also conscious of the physical as well as the social effects on man of the two seasons (see native interpretations of the two seasons and man in them, pages 378-386). The

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929)1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

182 Murngin express these effects socially in terms of values: the dry season is considered good and desirable, the rainy season undesirable but necessary to reproduce the benefits of the dry period.

The configuration of native thinking about the rainy season, evaluated under a feeling of comparative ill-being, includes thought of a scarcity of food, unpleasant physical surroundings, a minimum of creature comforts, small horde groupings because of food scarcity, little social activity, as well as the possibility of actual hunger, sickness, and privation, and even death from floods. These last possibilities are fairly remote but nevertheless they have occurred and are in the minds of the people as things that might happen.

The natives evaluate the dry season as one of well-being; and in the configuration of items within this general attitude are included a plenitude of foods, easy and pleasant surroundings and ample creature necessities, large horde groups, intense and enlarged social activity, and pleasant exciting behavior, such as hunting and harpooning; all of these might be summarized under things which are enjoyable and pleasant, and of a positive nature.

Control of the seasons by an adaptive mechanism is necessary if man is to survive. The technology successfully adapts man only to the periods of normal and abnormal plenitude, but it does not adjust him to the abnormal period of scarcity during a long rainy season or when nature for other reasons does not provide sufficiently. Control of nature is one of the functions of totemism, and the Murngin's totemic ideology has one of its firmest and most substantial roots in the negative and positive social evaluation of nature's effects on man's physical well-being and his social groups. The aim of this control, in the light of the above statement about the Murngin's thinking on the seasons, is to endeavor to repeat the pleasant dry period and to control the wet period and minimize its effects.

In the following charts (XII and XIII) the anatomy of Murngin totemic logic as it is expressed in the Wawilak and Djunkgao constellations is analyzed, and the general relations of myth and ritual, social organization and nature as a seasonal cycle are expressed.

Chart XII: Wawilak Totemic Logic

182 The Wawilak myth is expressed in the rituals ordinarily by the use 821 of four fundamental symbols: (1) the animals and countries are 773 named; (2) the animals run away into the python pool; (3) the snake swallows the women and animals; and (4) the men obtain the rituals

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

from the women. These underlying motifs found in the various segments of the several Wawilak rituals are expressed in the chart by the use of the arrows 1, 2, 3, and 4 which relate the myth and ritual rectangles.

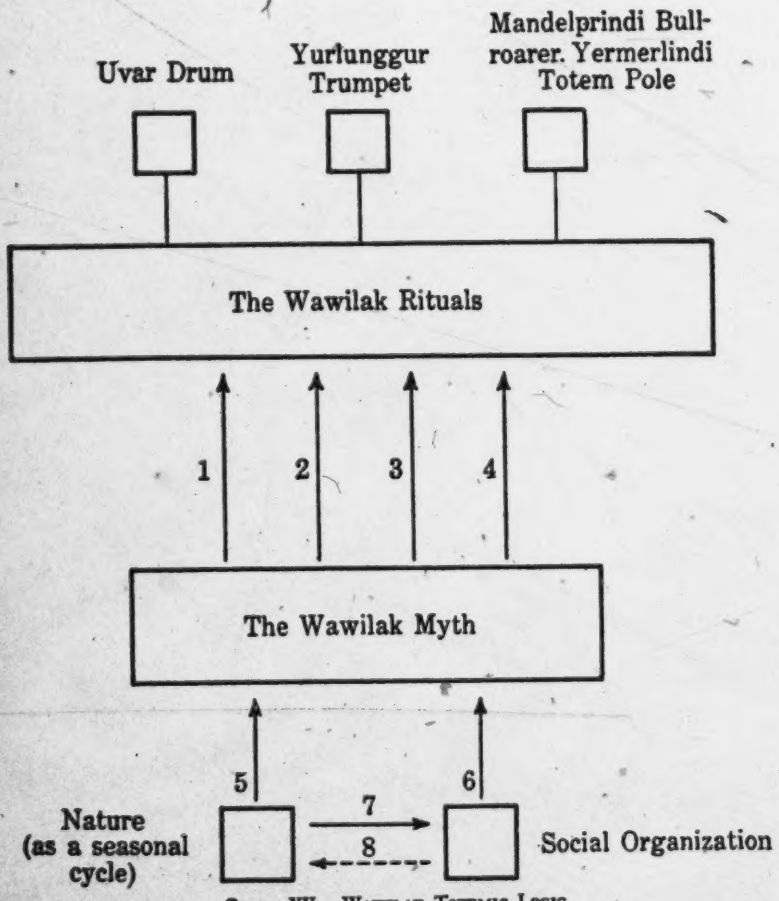

CHART XII.—WAWILAK TOTEMIC LOGIC

There is a direct relation between the myth and the seasonal cycles in the conception of the Murngin, directly symbolized in the myth. This relation is expressed by the arrow 5 leading from the square which is the seasonal cycle to the Wawilak myth. The social organization is also in direct relation with the myth, since it too is directly

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929)1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

182
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symbolized by it. This relation is expressed by the arrow 6 which joins the social organization to the myth.

Nature as a seasonal cycle definitely affects the activities of the social organization (see Chapter V). This is expressed by the arrow 7, relating the square of the seasonal cycles with that of the social organization. Murngin logic has it that the social organization also affects the seasonal cycle (broken arrow 8), for the rituals are believed to control the wet season. There is thus established a bilateral reciprocal arrangement in the minds of the Murngin which does not exist in reality. This bilateral reciprocal relationship between nature and the social organization is possibly due to the feeling among the Murngin for the balanced reciprocals that exist in their social relations within their social organization, and nature's relations to man are thought of accordingly.

The totemic objects at the top of the chart—the Uvar drum, the Yurlunggur trumpet, the bull roarer, and the totem pole—are manipulated by the rituals to express the symbols of the myth. The myth itself is saturated with the feelings, values and ideas which give this manipulation its meaning, and these values and meanings originate in the social organization directly as expressions of its various parts. These same meanings and values may also be direct expressions of the seasonal cycle, if it is understood that this means that the Murngin conceives the seasonal cycle to be a reality. The relations between seasonal cycle and the society are real, inasmuch as the society adjusts itself technologically to nature by means of techniques, of social values, and the meanings given to nature.

The seasonal cycle and social organization are identified as one in the myth-symbols of the Wawilak myth; and the myth-symbols are expressed and the identity of seasonal cycle and social organization is concretely stated in the manipulation of the emblems and in the rituals which surround them.

All this finally can be summarized: the totemic emblems and the ritual dances and songs express the symbols of the myth; the myth gives form to the meanings, values, and ideas of the society as one in ritual logic.

Chart XIII: Djunkgao Totemic Logic

The Narra and Djunkgao logic is a repetition of the Wawilak configuration. The totemic emblems, ritual, myth, seasonal variations, and social organization have the same set of relations and are or-

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

ganized into an analogous pattern which functions in the same manner in the general society. The differences which exist are: (1) the Djunkgao myth varies in detail and choice of manifest symbols (the totems are different, for example), and (2) the structure of the Djunkgao myth is not as well formalized and compact as is that of the Wawilak. The myth-symbols are: (1) the movements of the tides and floods; (2) the naming of animals and country; (3) the incestuous relations; and (4) the stealing of the totems.

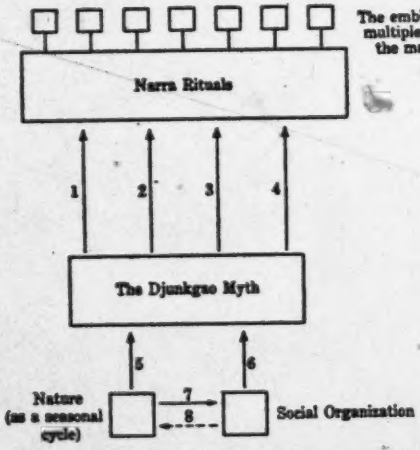

CHART XIII.—DJUNKGAO TOTEMIC LOGIC

It is now necessary, in our examination of the logical methods of the Murngin as expressed in the fundamental pattern of their totemism, further to break down the elements found within the configuration and to look at them in the light of thought processes. To do this I have had the good fortune to be supplied with the method worked out by C. K. Ogden and I. A. Richards in their brilliant book, *The Meaning of Meaning*. Unless the reader is familiar with their technique of thought analysis it will be wise for him to read carefully the summary of their method in the accompanying footnote.[5]—Let us examine Chart XIV.

[5] See Ogden, C. K., and Richards, I. A., *The Meaning of Meaning* (Harcourt, Brace and Company, New York, 1927). The authors present their analysis of logical and illogical thinking in our society and the relation of language to it. They use a triangle to illustrate their thesis: the words used in the language are placed at the left-hand basal corner and related to the idea which is being expressed by a solid line running from the base to the apex. The idea is connected with the thing referred to (referent) by a

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

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533
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(42) Wallaby carrying a spear and looking for fish.
The wallaby and kangaroo are always said to act like men and frequently symbolize man. "Kangaroo was a man at that time. He was just the same as we proper people that first time."

(43) The sun.
"The sun and that wallaby have gone into the bush, way inside, to make a camp."

(44) Shade in the western sky; the sun is in the east.

(45) A shade comes back this way.

(46) A kangaroo comes along with the shade.

(47) Afternoon.
"Sing Kangaroo jumping around slowly in the afternoon and going back again to the jungle."

(48) Wongar yolno.
"He goes back to his house in the bush too. He cleans the leaf away and makes him a good camp."

(49) Spear and mangel.
"He picks his spear and mangel up and dances."

(50) Red cloud.
The element used to finish the ceremony.

The red cloud is also supposed to appear in the skies just before night falls, and that is the reason, according to the Murngin, why it is used to symbolize the end of the ceremony. [824]

Yiritja Garma Land or Flood Cycle

(1) Black rain cloud.
"That cloud is ready for rain to fall down."

(2) A very heavy rain falling down.

(3) Water running down in a small creek.
"That water is running in a larger stream."

(4) Brook in the rain season when it is swollen with floods.

(5) Fresh-water turtle.
"When the fresh water starts running up high this fresh-water turtle swims along with it just like he has come up out of the ground through the spring water."

(6) Leech.
"His house is in the fresh water and he wriggles around. He is always with fresh-water turtle."

(7) Hollow log.
"This running water has thrown it across the stream and that log has stuck there"—an indirect reference to the log used for the interment of the bones.

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

YIRITJA SNAKE (BUR-O-O-LO)

This Wongar snake lives out on an island in Buckingham Bay in the ranga well there. The female lays her eggs in an ant bed. The eggs hatch and the young ones come back to the ranga well. This Wongar snake is different from all the rest because he lives just like any ordinary snake. If you go there you can see him in the island bush. 713X 825

Two men who are alive at the present time and are somewhere around forty years of age took a canoe and went there a few years ago and discovered several of these eggs lying in an ant bed. They cooked and ate them. That snake knew it immediately and went high into the sky. A small black cloud formed. It grew larger and the sun and the whole heavens were covered and Yiritja lightning came out of the clouds and licked at them like a snake's tongue. Heavy thunder and lightning knocked down the bark houses they had built.

No one can kill this Yiritja snake there because it would make so much rain that it would kill all men and the water would come up from the sea and cover the world. This snake lives among the water lilies. He has a black mark down his back. He kills kangaroos by wrapping himself around them. There are just two Wongar snakes there, a female and a male. No black man will kill those snakes. Any other kind is all right. Sometimes women kill the children of these snakes. They sneak up and do it because they don't understand the proper way to act. They cook and eat them and in a little while we understand because the rain and thunder and lightning come hard. When we men know this we call out, "Who has done this thing to us?" 713X 825 821

We keep asking and asking and finally some woman says, "I have killed him." 713X

We then gather singing sticks and sing very fast: 825 821 789

"Dur-ung-dun [thunder, Yiritja]
Mar-li-ar-ri-un [thunder, Yiritja]
Main-muk-dir [good lightning]
Kai-mer-a-na [snake]
Nar-lin-nar-lo [snake]
Bur-lo-o-lo [snake]
Kai-mer-a-na [snake]."

This is repeated a number of times. It is sung this way to stop the rain. This snake hears this and he stops. He understands we are calling out to him and he stops that rain. We black men are afraid that that snake will swallow us again because when it rains more and more that Yiritja snake might swallow us just like that Dua one did a long time ago. A few seasons ago we had a rain like that. It rained day and night for several weeks. We were all very afraid. We sang this way.

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

X 113 825 821 When the clouds finish and the rainbow comes out it sits down on that island. That rainbow is all the same that snake. It goes inside that well. We know then that some woman has been eating that snake. When we see in the Warumeri and Wangurri country a little cloud come up over that island we understand that that snake has blown and made that cloud and we are very near the rainy season again.

ALL-FATHER STORY

X 113 776 All black men have a Great Father up there in the sky who belongs to both Dua and Yiritja. His power names are Mang-o-lu, Dur-rung-na, and Li-li-pi-i-na. He looks like an ordinary man but he is much bigger. He is the head man of both Dua and Yiritja. Some men say he belongs only to Dua, but no one says he belongs to Yiritja.

Everything everywhere, fish, iguana, kangaroo, opossum, when he eats them he puts the bones in a pile and does not let them drop down to earth. If a fish bone dropped down it would make plenty of fish, or if a kangaroo bone dropped down it would make many kangaroos. In fact, any animal's bone that fell to earth would multiply its species.

Mangolu infrequently is said to be the father of the children of the two Wawilak sisters, but he was not the father of the Wawilaks. The father of the two creator women lived somewhere in the Nullikin tribe's country. His name was Wa-mo-lung-u (stone spear) and Bur-pa-lo-ma (stone-headed spear). This is the country where many of the flint quarries are found and which supplies much of the material for the stone spears of the Murngin.

FLYING FOX AND CIRCUMCISION

X 113 Two flying foxes were sitting down resting. One was the Dua kind who has a little touch of white on his wings. The other was Yiritja, for he was black all over. The black one said, "Let's circumcise each other."

The two then danced Marndiella. After they had finished it, each cut the other. They started crying out for the first time and their cry was the noise that flying foxes make in the trees when they are hunting for fruit in the night time. They said when they did this, "We'll cut ourselves so that people will always do like this."

Black men think like this today. First came the flying fox Wongar, then the Wongar yolno (men), then our old marikmo-bapa line (present-day man).

FLYING FOX AND DOG

In Wongar days Flying Fox could not talk. Dog could speak. Dog was the leader for Flying Fox. He said to Flying Fox, "What is the matter that you don't talk?"

Flying Fox could say nothing. Dog put his paw under his arm and

the various creatures and plants, created a sacred waterhole, Milmigarak, which later was inhabited by the giant mythical serpent, *wangaruk*.

One day the elder sister, when dipping water from the springs, accidentally polluted it with her menstrual blood.[42] This pollution so annoyed the serpent that he caused the water to boil over, i.e. flow out.[43] Even at the present day, when *wangaruk* becomes annoyed by the presence of unauthorized trespassers, he tries to leave the waterhole. But as soon as his head is visible the aboriginal medicine-men send him back by singing powerful chants, for should *wangaruk* start wandering over the land he would destroy everyone.

Wangaruk is of great length and size. He has a prominent nose, large eyes and a luxuriant beard. His head, however, is entirely bald, having the same appearance as a grey weathered boulder.[44] Although *wangaruk* has a voice like thunder, he does not appear to be associated with either the rain or the rainbow. Only the old men of the tribe are allowed to visit Milmigarak, drink its waters, or catch its fish.

On Pl. 87A the cross-hatched disc in the centre of the painting is the waterhole, Milmigarak. The other discs are non-sacred waters in the surrounding country, and the parallel lines native roads between them. The darker-coloured cross-hatched panels *a*, *b*, etc., represent the menstrual blood of the *Djunkgao* sister which polluted the waterhole.

The Djunkgao Sisters at Milingimbi

This is a fragment of a myth from Milingimbi, which relates how the *Djunkgao* women created a spring of water at Milmur, a place on the mainland, south of Elcho Island.

On Pl. 87D the two women, shown as lizards, with their carrying-baskets beside them, occupy the upper part of the painting. The design below symbolizes the sacred waterhole created by them.[45]

The Djunkgao Sisters at Goulburn Island

Plate 86E depicts a swamp at Goulburn Island which is associated with the *Djunkgao* sisters.

On panel *b* are a number of water-birds catching fish, one of them having a fish in its mouth. Panel *a*, which is similar to the sand-hill design of the *wredjingu mata* of Port Bradshaw,[46] represents the ripples on the swamp caused by the water-birds as they chase the fish.

42. This fragment has been borrowed from the *Waralik* myth, see p. 278.
43. The mythical serpents in the Oenpelli area cause their waterholes to overflow when they are annoyed (see p. 208, p. 218, etc.).
44. The head of the mythical serpent living in the spring near the Elcho Island mission station is said to resemble a stone.
45. This design is similar to that used for the sacred wells, shown in Pl. 87A. This may be a *mata* design belonging to a *dua* language group (see Fig. 61F).
46. The same design is present on a crayon drawing dealing with *Djunkgao* at Port Bradshaw. Berndt, 1952, Pl. 7.

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 OI17 Murngin OI17

776 *776 *773 *Tjambuwal* felt so ill from his wounds that he left the stranded prau on the beach, lay down in his camp and went to sleep.

During the night tide the Malays launched their boat and by the time *Tjambuwal* woke up in the morning were actually within sight of their home-land. When the thunder-man saw that his enemies had again escaped him, he was furious. Stretching himself to his full height, for he was a very tall man, and seeing the Malay prau far away in the distance, he pushed his way through the water at even greater speed than before, the waves which formed in front of him almost swamping the prau. *Tjambuwal* succeeded in pulling the prau back once more to Waranaka, even though the crew threw out their anchor to retard his progress and paddled strongly in the opposite direction. However, before *Tjambuwal* was able to destroy their boat the Malays succeeded in fatally wounding him by cutting off both of his arms at the shoulders. As *Tjambuwal* lay dying on the beach he called out in a voice of thunder:

'Listen to what I say. When I die I will go into the sky; you will always hear my voice in the storms.'

776 *773 ●881 *532 From that time onward *Tjambuwal* has lived in the clouds. When, at the beginning of the wet season, the clouds on which he travels reach a point of land called Jalboa, about three miles north-west of Yirrkalla, they get lower and lower until the thunder-man is able to throw a double-ended club, *burununda*,[59] at the cliff, which, as it strikes, shatters the rock, then breaks in many pieces. These pieces enter the ground and become edible yams, called *bualku*.[60] Almost immediately afterwards the thunder-man urinates and, as the urine falls down an adjacent cliff, it cuts a series of parallel meandering lines in the rock. *Tjambuwal* then picks up a number of white stones, *milurik* (once hailstones) which are lying at the base of the cliff[61] and throws them into the sky. These stones quickly grow in size and become large thunder-clouds, on the top of which *Tjambuwal* rides from place to place. As the storm develops the thunder-man, with another double-ended club, similar to the *burununda*, creates black rain clouds. The aborigines say that the thunder from the cumulus clouds is the voice of *Tjambuwal* and the banner of rain which falls from the base of a thunderstorm is his penis.[62]

Within the rain clouds *Tjambuwal* places many spirit children, *jurtu*. These little creatures descend in the raindrops into the sea and enter the bodies of either the *dua* fish or green turtles, or if on the land, the nests of *dua* wild honey and other foods.[63] Sometimes when *Tjambuwal* is sailing along on the top of the clouds he sees the rock cod, *akurata*, in the sea below. From his high place *Tjambuwal* transfixes the fish with his spear, *larapan*,[64] then descends into the sea and kills it with his club, *barlait*. The stench from the decaying fish, rising into the air, causes more rain clouds to form.

59. Pl. 130B. 60. Pl. 131E. 61. Pl. 91F.
62. See carved figure of *Tjambuwal*, Pl. 130A, B.
63. The spirit children of *Tjambuwal* will only live on the land or sea foods belonging to the *dua* moiety.
64. Pl. 130J.

THE ART OF YIRRKALLA

776
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The aborigines produced seven bark paintings, two carved and painted figures and five ceremonial objects which belonged to the myth of *Tjambuwal*.[65]

Plate 90A illustrates the myth of *Tjambuwal* and the prau of the Malays. In the upper right-hand panel is the Malay prau with the characteristic tripod mast and curious projections from the bow. Within the prau are five men, one of whom, with a large knife, is amputating the arms of *Tjambuwal* (lower right panel). The groups of curving parallel lines round *Tjambuwal's* arms represent the sea-water that was stained by the blood which poured from his wounds. Similar groups of lines round the body of *Tjambuwal* (lower right) are the waves rising in front of his legs as he waded after the prau.

In the upper left-hand panel the main design is a Malay anchor made of wood and shod with metal. This is the anchor the Malays threw overboard to hinder the progress of the prau as *Tjambuwal* dragged it to shore. The vertical parallel lines in this panel represent rain falling from the clouds above (triangular patterns). The lower left-hand panel pictures the injured *Tjambuwal* with his arms cut off at the shoulders. Round him are the curving clouds, *wulmu*, usually associated with the thunder-man.[66]

Plate 90B is the thunder-man, *Tjambuwal*.[67] In one hand is the spear, *larapan* (Pl. 130J) he used to capture the rock cod, *akurata*, and in the other his club, *barlait* (Pl. 130C) with which he killed it. The curving lines over the ancestor's head are clouds called *wulmu*. On the right, the clouds are pouring rain upon the earth, and on the left are the 'pink' clouds which, the aborigines say, form in the sky when the rain is finished.

Plate 90C shows *Tjambuwal* holding above his head the spear thrown to kill the rock cod. When a meteor speeds across the sky the aborigines believe that *Tjambuwal* has thrown his spear, and that the fiery trail of the meteor is its path. The shaft of the spear is curved to represent the path of the meteor.

[821]

Plate 90D deals with the green turtle, *gariwa*, the storm clouds and the thunder-man, *Tjambuwal*.[68] In panels *a* and *b* are two green (*dua*) turtles in the sea-weed (shown by curving lines of cross-hatching). The crescent-shaped designs in the panels on the left of the turtles are waves beating against each other, and those on the right, rough seas breaking on a reef of rocks, indicated by the central cross-hatched panel, *c*. On the upper right-hand panel, *d* symbolizes a large rain cloud, while below it are several thunder-men who have come down from the cloud; rain is still falling from their feet (shown as vertical parallel lines). In their left hands the thunder-men hold the club, *barlait*, and in their right the spear, *larapan*, with which they have transfixed the rock cod, *akurata*. They are holding the rock-cod in the sky on the ends of their spears. Immediately to the left of the figures of *Tjambuwal* is a double-ended club, *burununda*, and a spear.

65. The carved and painted objects are described in Part 5.
66. See also bark paintings, Pl. 90B, D.
67. Interpretation by F. D. McCarthy.
68. Interpretation by F. D. McCarthy.

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 OII7 Murngin OII7

these stones (or their spirits) into the sky, so that they will become cumulus clouds in which he can travel from place to place.[74] The thunder-man also throws his spear, *larapan*, at the rock cod, *akurata*, and kills the fish. But instead of eating it he allows it to become putrid, so that the stench will rise into the sky and create more rain clouds.[75] 773* 776 [821]

The two figures on Pl. 89A are the dead sons of *Tjambuwal*, whose bodies were transformed into the white stones, *milarik* (cross-hatched ovals). The parallel black lines on the left-hand edge are the spears, *larapan*, used by *Tjambuwal* to transfix the rock cod (the three cross-hatched ovals at *a*). The pear-shaped figure at *b* is the yam *bawal*,[76] the food of *Tjambuwal*. The black area at *c* is a rain cloud formed from the stench of the decaying rock cod. 773* 776 532*

The Thunder-man, Tjambuwal, and the Man, Maijaunguri, at Jalboa

One day a mythical man, *Maijaunguri*, went fishing along the coast near the totemic place, Jalboa, of the thunder-man and speared many rock cod, *akurata*. He returned to his camp, made a fire and put on the fish to cook. The smoke and the odour of the cooking fish, ascending into the sky, attracted the attention of *Tjambuwal*, who happened to be passing in a cumulus cloud. On looking down he saw that *Maijaunguri* had speared and was cooking a fish which, belonging only to him, was forbidden all other people. *Tjambuwal*, angry over the outrage, created a rain-storm to extinguish the fire, then descended from the clouds and killed the offender with his club, *barlait*.[77] 773* 532*

Plate 89D illustrates the myth of the mythical man, *Maijaunguri*, and the rock cod. In the bottom panel is the man spearing the fish, which he has placed on the fire, *a*. In the top panel is *Tjambuwal*. Above him at *b* is the large cloud in which he was travelling when he smelt the odour of the cooking fish. The cross-hatched vertical panels on either side of the thunder-man represent the sky and broken clouds.

Oijal and his Sister, Neri-neri

In the early days of the world *Oijal* and his sister, *Neri-neri*, travelled along the western coast of the Gulf of Carpentaria and through north-eastern Arnhem Land, creating many rivers and other natural features. 773*

When camping at Dimbuka, near Blue Mud Bay, the brother and sister made several honey baskets. Then, taking a stone-headed spear, a spear-thrower and a stone axe, they set out to find a nest of the *dua* male wild honey, *jurapang*. By following a bee flying towards its home, they located a hive in a hollow tree near Trial Bay. *Oijal* and *Neri-neri* cut the tree down and, splitting it open,

74. The aborigines believe that there is a thunder-man in every cumulus cloud, even those which form on the top of the smoke of a bush fire. [821]

75. In the *jiritja* myth of *Waikinbu*, rotting fish left behind by the mythical man caused the thunder-clouds to form (p. 288).

76. See Pl. 151F for the illustration of this yam, called *boulku* at Yirrkalla.

77. See the club, *barlait*, Pl. 138C.

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 OI17 Murngin OI17

The Man, Waikinbu, at Cape Shield

*773 *532 [84] At Cape Shield, during mythical times, a *jiritja* man, *Waikinbu*, speared two large fish in a nearby lagoon. He cooked them, had a very large meal, then lay down in the shade of the trees to sleep off the effects, leaving the fish beside the camp-fire. But he slept so long that the fish, becoming fly-blown and putrid, created such a stench that heavy thunder-clouds formed over the top of them.[89]

The long ellipse, Pl. 91B, is the lagoon at Cape Shield in which *Waikinbu*, lower right, speared the two fish. The design across the centre of the ellipse is the camp-fire where *Waikinbu* cooked his catch, and at *a* is the tree under which he went to sleep. The short strokes on the periphery of the ellipse represent the maggots from the decaying fish travelling away from it in long lines. At *b* and *c* are the tracks of the *gunjun* crabs leaving their holes to eat the fish. When *Waikinbu* woke and looked up into the sky he saw that three thunderstorms, *d*, *d*, *d*, had formed in the sky over the putrid fish. The boomerang shapes indicate small stratus clouds which form underneath the thunderstorms.

The central ellipse of the painting is now an extensive lagoon and the tracks of the maggots and of the crabs are lines of sand-hills close to the shore.

The Rain-makers, Wuluwait and Bunbulama

*773 989 *532 When the mythical people *Wuluwait*, the man, and *Bunbulama*, the woman, wanted rain they tied bundles of water-grass together and soaked them in the swamp. The aborigines still follow a similar practice. After the bundles have been in the water for a day or more, clouds begin to form. In a short time the rain not only falls but continues to do so as long as the rain-making bundles are left in the swamp.

The figures in Pl. 91C are the rain-makers, *Wuluwait* and *Bunbulama*,[90] with the magic bundles in their hands. Above them is a rainbow, with the rain, vertical cross-hatched panels, falling from it. The black space between the rain symbols is a gap in the storm. The hair radiating from the heads of the rain-makers is also associated with rain, one informant stating that, instead of hair, the water-grass used to make up the rain-making bundles grew from the heads of the mythical people. On the bottom edge of the painting, reading from the left, the first two cone-like figures are rocks and the last three, termite mounds associated with the totem place of the rain-makers. The vertical lines on the sides represent falling rain. Rain is also pouring from the two rain-making bundles.

The Man, Nalili, at Caledon Bay

*773 *532 262 The mythical *jiritja* man, *Nalili*, lived on the sea coast and beside the swamps at Caledon Bay, collecting as food shell-fish, crabs and oysters from among the mangroves, and fruit, yams and animals from the forest and swamps at the rear.

89. There is a *duo* myth of the thunder-man *Tjambuwal* in which the stench of rotting fish caused thunderstorms and rain (Pl. 89D).

90. See carved wooden figure of woman, *Bunbulama*, Pl. 133A, B, and bark figures of *Wuluwait* and *Bunbulama*, Fig. 65C, D; also colour plate facing p. 267.

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 OII7 Muragin OII7

'Last night a *jurtu* came and asked me for a mother, so I sent it to you.' Within a short time the mother shows signs of pregnancy.

In the middle of Pl. 99B is *Tjambuwal*, holding the spirit child, *jurtu*, by the hand. Over his head are the boomerang-shaped clouds, *wulmu*. The groups of curving cross-hatched panels on the upper edge and the left-hand side of the painting are rain clouds, *b*, the home of the spirit child. On the right-hand side are two men spearing a turtle inhabited by a *jurtu* and on the left a pregnant woman. The curving cross-hatched lines at *a*, on the extreme right of the painting, represent the water disturbed by the wounded creature.

(ii) *The Conception Beliefs of the Jiritja Moiety*

The conception beliefs of the *jiritja* moiety vary somewhat from those of the *dua*. They believe that when a woman ceases to menstruate her blood goes into the sky and is there changed into a spirit child, *jurtu*. After some time the little *jurtu*, desiring an earthly mother, creates a thunderstorm and a rainbow, and, using the raindrops as a vehicle of travel, descends to the earth. If the *jurtu* falls into the sea, it enters some *jiritja* creature such as a dugong, a hawksbill turtle or a queen fish; if on the land, a hive of *jiritja* honey, *kamon* or *barangit*, or the body of some *jiritja* creature. Should the aborigines spear a dugong and find that it is particularly fat, or locate a hive well stocked with honey, they know that the dugong or the hive is inhabited by a spirit child.

When, for example, the dugong is cut open, and the *jurtu* escapes, it visits the sleeping father and asks him which of his wives is to be his mother. As with the *dua* moiety, the father points out a wife who has ceased menstruating. The child enters her body through the vulva. If the father remembers next morning he tells the expectant mother about his dream. Soon afterwards the woman feels the movements of the *jurtu* within her body. As soon as a woman ceases to menstruate, she must not eat meat or fish. Her diet is limited to grass-seeds, yams, the fruit of the cycad, shell-fish and crabs.

On Pl. 99C the father and pregnant mother are at the upper edge of the painting. On either side of them are large thunder-clouds created by the spirit child, *jurtu*. On the right of the painting is falling rain, parallel lines of cross hatching, and on the extreme left two dugongs; the cross hatching around them is the sea. The U-shaped symbol is a rainbow created by the little *jurtu*, at the base of which is one who has descended on the raindrops. He is swimming about in the sea, waiting for an opportunity to enter the body of one of the dugongs which, he hopes, will be captured by the men in the canoe.[12] The artist explained that he had made a mistake by not allowing himself enough room to paint the dugong in the canoe with the spirit child inside of it. So he painted the *jurtu* only.

12. The *jurtu*, like the *ouri* of the Adnjamatana tribe of the northern Flinders Ranges of South Australia, are, before they enter the mother, complete, self-directing beings. Mountford and Harvey (1941), p. 159.

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 O117 Murngin O117

after another. At first the spears penetrate deeply into his flesh, but after a while it becomes so hard and tough that the spears cannot even pierce the skin.[47] While this is going on, the women sit on the ground and wail in sympathy for the sufferings of the new spirit.

This ordeal over, the men of Purelko take the new spirit to their camp, tell him that he has passed his initiation, teach him many new songs and dances and invite him to join in their ceremonies.

The method of entry of the spirit of a woman is somewhat different. When the masked plover, *berrk-berrk*, announces the arrival of a new spirit and the head man, *Jaualin-wuru*, finds out that it is a woman, he sends a small child along the track which leads from the beach to Purelko, telling it to find its mother and bring her to him. *Jaualin-wuru* always camps on that track so that no one can reach Purelko without being properly prepared. After *Jaualin-wuru* has met the new arrival and, if necessary, transformed her into a young woman in good health, she stays in his camp until she is pregnant. She is then admitted to Purelko where, after a short and painless period of gestation, she gives birth to her child. The idea behind this belief is that a woman, who must be perfect to enter Purelko, has to show that she is capable of bearing a child.

Two women, *Dunjun-jina* and *Mitjuna*, live at Purelko and keep the morning star, *barnumbir*, in a string bag, guarding it jealously all the day and most of the night, lest it should escape. A little before dawn, *Jaualin-wuru*, the head man of Purelko, says to the women: 'It's time that you let the morning star out of that bag so that it can visit the *dua* camps on earth both to wake up the men, women and children and to give them the messages from the dead.'

The woman *Mitjuna* objects strongly to this suggestion, because she is afraid that she might lose *barnumbir*, but *Jaualin-wuru* overrules her, and releases the morning star, which is already struggling to get out of the bag to perform its allotted tasks.[48] At first *barnumbir* rests on the top of a tall pandanus tree from which it can see a long distance. This causes the women to cry out in fear that they might lose the star, and to ask that it be returned to them. To pacify the women *Jaualin-wuru* pulls the morning star back again, it is on a string—and puts it in the bag. But, though the women are pleased, *Jaualin-wuru* thinks of the aborigines on earth waiting for their messages. So he opens the bag again and allows *barnumbir* to escape. For a while the morning star dances along the surface of the water, but soon climbs rapidly into the sky. It visits each *dua* place in turn,[49] wakes the aborigines and then gives them messages from their relatives and friends at Purelko. Just as dawn is breaking *Jaualin-wuru* takes hold of the

47. The body is speared when it is taken from the burial platform, p. 312. Warner (1937), p. 443, refers to the same practice. All the male spirits have to pass through this initiation ritual at Purelko. There are different rituals for the women, p. 326. There are no such ordeals in the *pupa* heaven, Nalkuna.

48. The *dua* moiety of Milingimbi have a similar belief. Myth, p. 328.

49. See p. 327 for the list of *dua* localities.

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 OE17 Murngin OE17

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string, pulls in the star and, placing it in the carrying-bag, gives it to the women who guard it until the next morning.

One bark painting, Pl. 99A, illustrates the *dua* journey of the dead; another, Pl. 101B, the flight of the *dua* morning star, *barnumbir*, from Purelko.[50]

The lower part of the right-hand panel, *a*, of Pl. 99A shows the dead spirit arriving at Junundi, on the western shores of Melville Bay, after he has been ferried across by his ghostly boatman. The dead man is in the stern. The upper part of the cross-hatching indicates the sea; the lower, the shore. The upper part, *b*, of the right-hand panel deals with the ceremony held by the *Mokoi* at Junundi, Melville Bay. On the right are two performers, each holding in their hands the red jungle-flower, *wakaro-nani*. A third man is blowing the drone tube, another beating the music sticks together, while three men, with their hands upraised, are chanting the songs.

In the lower part of the central panel, *c*, the dead man and his companion have crossed the sea, indicated by the vertical cross-hatched band *g*, and landed at Dambalia. Two of the *Mokoi* (*d*, upper central panel) are holding in their hands the flower of the yam, *mawoka*; others are either blowing the drone tube, beating the music sticks or singing.

The left-hand panel, *e*, pictures the arrival at Purelko. The tree-like design, panel *f*, is the morning star, *barnumbir*.[51] On the right-hand edge are two men, one blowing the drone tube, the other beating the music sticks. The birds on the upper and lower edge are the plovers, *berrk-berrk*, which announced the arrival of the new spirit and the small figure at the bottom, a child, who also saw his arrival. The new spirit is in the extreme lower left. Next to him is *Junalin-wuru*, and in the upper left, a man who is singing. The vertical cross hatched band, *h*, is the sea between Dambalia and Purelko.

Plate 101B deals with the flight of the *dua* morning star, *barnumbir*. This painting has a dual meaning. In the first place, it represents the yam, *mawoka*, apparently a climbing plant, the flower of which is used by the *Mokoi* and the new spirit in the ceremonies at Dambalia. The design at the base is the yam, *mawoka*; the two ovals on the trunk, the fruit, *bukulita*; and the designs on the end of each branch, the blossoms. The swellings on some of the branches indicate where the creeper has twined itself round a tree.

The meaning of the painting is very different in the myth of the morning-star, *barnumbir*. The design at the base is the carrying-bag in which the morning star is imprisoned by the two women, *Dunjun-jinu* and *Mitpuna*, standing either side. The women are objecting to the order from *Junalin-wuru* that the morning star must be released. Each of the blossoms represents a locality.[52]

Starting from the lowest blossom on the left, and reading in a clockwise direction, the localities are:

50. Warner (1937), p. 527, records that *Barnumbir* only visits *dua* localities.
51. See bark painting of morning star, Pl. 101A, in Milingimbi myth.
52. Although I did not specifically inquire, the evidence suggests that each of these localities belongs to either a *dua* clan, *mala*, or language group, *mata*.

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ARNHEM LAND: ART, MYTH AND SYMBOLISM

1. North of Arnhem Bay
2. South of Arnhem Bay
3. Elcho Island
4. South of Rocky Beach, south of Yirrkalla
5. Dambalia (Bremer Island)
6. Wessel Islands
7. A small unidentified island in Buckingham Bay
8. English Company Islands, near Cape Wilberforce
9. Buckingham Bay, south side
10. Blue Mud Bay
11. Northern Blue Mud Bay
12. West Blue Mud Bay
13. Koolatong River
14. Between Caledon and Blue Mud Bays
15. Caledon Bay
16. Mt Saunders, between Port Bradshaw and Caledon Bay
17. Jelangbara, near Port Bradshaw
18. Port Bradshaw

I also collected a painting and myth from the Milingimbi area, which dealt with the Djiraia, the *dua* home of the dead (analagous to Purelko), and the morning star, *barnumbir*. Except for different names and locality, the beliefs are essentially the same. This painting indicates that the *dua* moiety of north-eastern Arnhem Land have more than one 'heaven'.

[776] Djiraia, the home of the dead and the morning star, is situated on a rocky island somewhere east of the English Company Islands (Fig. 1). Two spirit men, *Jumundik* and *Dalnuranu*, are in charge. When a member of the tribes who live adjacent to Milingimbi dies, no matter where he is, his spirit, after the burial ceremonies are completed, goes straight to Djiraia.[53] As the spirit approaches the shore two masked plovers announce his arrival. The spirits of the dead, the *Mokoi*, then stand on the shore to welcome him.

If a man or woman has been evil, malicious or bad-tempered, he is changed into a person of good nature before he enters the spirit land, because all must be happy and at peace with each other. Also, should the spirit be aged, infirm or sick, he is made young and healthy again, for in that country all must be well. In Djiraia there is no want, no hardships and no quarrels. There is an abundance of food everywhere, fish in the swamps and the seas, and kangaroos, emus and other game in the forest. It is never cold, so that everyone, being young and transformed into a good person, is happy. The days are spent in hunting and eating, and the evenings in song and ceremony.

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The morning star, *barnumbir*,[54] is kept in a cave under the care of two women, who sleep all day and most of the night. But just before dawn these women wake up and tell the two men, *Jumundik* and *Dalnuranu*, that it is time they stopped their singing and let the morning star out of the cave to wake up mankind, otherwise they will sleep all day long. When *barnumbir* is first released it dances up and down on the surface of the sea. It then climbs up a tall pandanus tree, then flies through the air to visit a number of localities where the aborigines live. When the dawn breaks the women take hold of the string

[825] 53. According to Warner (1937), p. 366, these spirits are carried by the porpoises (dolphins).
54. See Milingimbi myth of morning star, Warner (1937), p. 327.

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 OII7 Murngin OII7

attached to *barnumbir*, pull it back and imprison it in the cave until the next morning.[55]

On the lower left of Pl. 101A is *Jumundik*, with his wooden trumpet to the left of him and his two music sticks to the right. On the right is *Dalnuranu*, who, with *Jumundik*, is in charge of Djiraia. His wooden trumpet, *a*, and music sticks are on his right. The footprints are those of the *Mokoi* spirits at Djiraia. There was no explanation for the fish. The white circle on the top of the central design is the morning star, *barnumbir*, and the long rectangle below, the rays of light, called *balai-alba*, which issue from it.

A number of spirit people provide food for the inhabitants of their respective 'heavens'. *Turi-turi* is one of them.[56]

One day *Turi-turi*, an expert fisherman, set out in a bark canoe to hunt for turtles. When he was far out to sea, a heavy storm came up, broke the canoe in halves and drowned *Turi-turi*.

After his death the spirit of *Turi-turi* went to Purelko, where he still spends all of his time catching green turtles for the inhabitants of that spirit land. The *dua Mokoi*, *Balu-balu*, also provide food for their companions at Purelko.[57]

Plate 106A shows the man, *Turi-turi*, paddle in hand, standing in his canoe. To the left is the green turtle he wanted to capture. The white cross-hatching on the lower edge represents the waves which destroyed *Turi-turi's* canoe and finally drowned him. The remainder of the background is the sea.

(ii) *The Journey of the Jiritja Spirits of the Dead*

When, at the completion of the burial ceremonies, the bones of the dead man are placed in the log coffin, the spirit leaves its bones, with which it has been associated since death, and, guided by the call of the jungle-fowl, makes its way to a forest, Gurila, north of Port Bradshaw. There it is met by female *Mokoi* called the *Wulu-wulu*,[58] whose duty it is to assist the spirit of newly-dead to reach the *jiritja* 'heaven', Nalkuma. The *Wulu-wulu* takes the new spirit to another *Mokoi*, *Kultana*, the head man of Nalkuma, who first gives him two paddles, then instructs him how to make a special wooden canoe, called *jililbun*,[59] in which both can travel to Nalkuma. When the canoe is finished and the two are ready to set out on their journey, the women, *Wulu-wulu*, give the new spirit two seed pods, *gurung-guru*, of the *menin* vine (*Mucuna gigantea*),[60] which will serve him as a passport to Nalkuma. Any spirit who tries to gain admittance to the land of the dead without this passport is hunted away.

55. This is similar to the Yirrkalla myth of the morning star, p. 326, except that at Yirrkalla the two women object to the release of the morning star.
56. The myths of *Turi-turi* and the *Balu-balu* are analagous to those of the *jiritja Mokoi* who come to Cape Arnhem in their wooden canoes to capture dugongs for the inhabitants of Nalkuma.
57. See myth of *Balu-balu*, p. 132, associated with a painted paddle, Pl. 144E, F.
58. See myth of carved figure of *Wulu-wulu*, p. 343.
59. In another part of the same myth this canoe is called *Lampu*.
60. See Pl. 100C for illustration of these seed pods.

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 OII7 Muragin OII7

Meanwhile some of the inhabitants of Nalkuma, knowing of the impending arrival of the new spirit, have paddled to Cape Arnhem to capture a dugong so that there will be food for the welcoming ceremony. Others light a grass fire, the smoke of which will guide *Kultana* and his companion to their destination.

The inhabitants of Nalkuma, when they see the canoe in the distance, assemble on the shore to welcome the new arrival. His immediate friends first embrace him, then invite him to take part in the meal of dugong flesh, recently captured at Cape Arnhem. Afterwards they perform with him their favourite dances and songs. After all these activities are over the people of Nalkuma help their new companion to prepare his camp. This activity causes so much dust to rise into the sky that large cumulus clouds are formed.[61] When the aborigines on earth see those clouds they know the spirit of the man whose bones they had recently placed in his log coffin has reached Nalkuma, and that their period of mourning is over.

Three bark paintings deal with the *jiritja* heaven, Nalkuma.

Plate 100D depicts the *jiritja* heaven, Nalkuma. In panel *a* are three spirit men in the canoe, *Lampu*. Reading from the left, they are, *Beiluru*, *Uramula* and *Teri-teri*, all of whom are on their way from Nalkuma to Cape Arnhem to spear dugongs. In the upper left of the same panel and the lower right of panel *d* is *Kultana*, the head man of Nalkuma, smoking a pipe, for tobacco has always been available in Nalkuma. The long symbol on panel *b* is the cumulus cloud which forms on the top of the dust cloud caused by the spirits when preparing the camp. The triangular symbols *c*, on the left of the same panel, are the small clouds which are present after the cumulus has disintegrated.

Panel *e*, on the top of the painting, refers to the happenings at Nalkuma on the arrival of the new spirits. At *f*, on the upper left, is one of the new spirits being embraced by an old friend, and the nine figures along the upper edge are other spirits waiting to be welcomed. On the opposite edge of the same panel are a number of *Mokoi* ready to take part in the welcoming ceremony. The central line of eight figures are *Mokoi* swimming in the sea. The trees, *g*, *g*, *g*, are *kanari* (*Calophyllum inophyllum*) and the dark mark in the branches is the dense shade which this tree, with its large leaves, casts on the ground.

On Pl. 100A, panels *a*, *b* and *c* refer to the burial rituals. These have already been described on p. 314. Panels *d* and *e* deal with the journey of the dead to Nalkuma, and *f* to their reception at that place. On the left-hand edge of panel *d* are four of the female *Wulu-wulu* who live in the Gurila jungle of Port Bradshaw. They are giving the seed pods of the *menin* vine, *gurung-guru*, to the new spirit, centre. To the right are the two jungle-fowls whose call guided him to this locality.

In the upper right, panel *e*, the new spirit is being paddled to Nalkuma by the chief *Mokoi*, *Kultana*. A number of inhabitants of the home of the dead,

61. Cumulus clouds often form on the top of the smoke of bush-fires. Clouds of dust could cause the same phenomenon.

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 OI17 Murngin OI17

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radiating lines round the head indicate a ceremonial head-dress the men are wearing.

Plate 107C deals with the totemic place of the *Baijini* at Port Bradshaw. In panel *a* are lines of clouds, triangular patterns, and between them the two totemic wells, dark circles, in which the *Baijini* ancestors now live. The aborigines can drink the water. The footmarks indicate the *Baijini* coming to and from the well.[76] In the upper part of the panel, *b*, is a Malay type of anchor used by the *Baijini*, and below, a wet-season cloud, with fish on either side.

In panel *c* the two rectangles on the left side are totemic rocks under the water. The upper central figure is a turtle and the lower central figure, a frog, *garakman*, standing on a rock. On the right are two webs of night spiders which have luminous eyes. The rectangles in *d* represent two rocks under the water, besides which a dugong is feeding on the sea-grass, *gumala*, indicated by the parallel lines at the head of the creature.

Two women, *Mai-auwa*, panel *e*, are standing on a large rock on shore, crying for the wet-season rains to stop.[77] The parallel lines from the bottom of the clouds in panel *b* (above the two women) symbolize the north-westerly, *bara* (wet-season) rains pouring from the cloud. In panel *f* the rectangles are areas of land associated with the *Baijini* ancestors. There are cloud symbols on the left and *Baijini* footmarks on the right.

Plate 107D again refers to the *Baijini*, this time in a creation myth.

Gurumuluna, the head man of the *Baijini*, and his sister camped at a waterhole, Boumala, on the southern side of Port Bradshaw. After a while, transforming themselves into flying foxes, the brother and sister flew to Dulmumnia, on the western shore of the port, where they changed themselves back into human beings and copulated. Both their footprints and the marks of the woman's buttocks can be seen on the rocks at Dulmumnia. Later, as flying foxes, they flew to Melville Bay, where again, transforming themselves into human beings, they lived as man and wife. The cross-hatched triangles are clouds, *binjalo*,[78] which are seen at the beginning of the wet season. In the centre is *Gurumuluna* and his sister *Baijini* and between them the waterhole, Boumala. The footmarks were made by the brother and sister when they visited the waterhole.

Plate 108A pictures *Gurumuluna* and an unidentified *Baijini* companion. The lines from their heads are ceremonial decorations, and the triangular symbols encircling the figures, wet-weather clouds, *binjalo*.

Plate 108B pictures three *Baijini* men who came to Port Bradshaw in a boat and built a house for themselves. Reading from the left, their names are *Gurumuluna*, the head man, *Woantjini* and *Daimbari*. On the left of *Gurumuluna* is

76. Possibly the waterhole, Boumala, Pl. 107D.

77. The aboriginal women wail in unison to stop the wet season wind, *bara*, and to start the *limara* wind as did the mythical woman *Muralumungau* of Bremer Island. Pl. 136B, B; myth, p. 173.

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78. These triangular cloud symbols, probably a *mata* design, are particularly common in the *pintya* art of Cape Arnhem and Port Bradshaw, but absent elsewhere. The same symbol is present in the Celebes (Kaudern, 1911, Figs. 159 9) and may be the source of this *pintya* symbol.

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 OII7 Murngin OII7

baron, a stingray, *kawangalk-miri*, two hawksbill turtles, *kouwaradji*, and the turtle rocks shown in Pl. 110E. In panel *f* there are two stingrays.

The Queen Fish, Tinimbu, the Turtle, Kouwaradji, and the Octopus, Mainda

The upper panel of Pl. 106C contains four octopi, *mainda*, and a turtle, *kouwaradji*, and in the bottom panel three queen fish, *tinimbu*, and a number of octopi. The figure at the lower left, to which two octopi have attached themselves, and on which one of the queen fish is resting, is an unidentified totemic rock on the bottom of the sea between Port Bradshaw and Cape Arnhem.*

The Whales, Welerrin and Morokundja, and the Stingray, Kawangalk-miri, at Cape Arnhem

In the early days, two mythical whales[1] lived in large caves at the bottom of the sea at Cape Arnhem. The male was called *welerrin*, and the female *morokundja*. They had as a companion a stingray, *kawangalk-miri*. At the close of the creation period the whales and the stingray went into the sky and are now portions of the Milky Way near the constellation of Orion.

The first figure to the left of Pl. 106D is the female whale, *morokundja*, the next is the male, *welerrin*, and the third the stingray, *kawangalk-miri*. The two dark-coloured rectangles, *a* and *b*, at the upper right and left, are caves at the bottom of the sea where the whales once lived. The white cross-hatching is sea-water and the darker-coloured cross-hatched panels, water which was clouded by the stingray when it was feeding along the bottom. The parallel lines above the heads of the whales symbolize the water parting as they swam and the white triangle on their heads, their blow-hole.

Totem Place of the Devil-ray, Mularn, and the Whale, Morokundja, at Nantjaka, Cape Arnhem

On the upper left of Pl. 108B is the devil-ray, *mularn*, surrounded by panels of triangular designs representing clouds. On the upper right is a whale, *morokundja* (most likely *Megaptera australis*).[2] The cross-hatching surrounding the whale indicates the disturbance it creates as it swims through the water.

On the left, at *a*, are two oval rocks, the haunts of the hawksbill turtles and sailfish, *kunderunga*, shown to the right of the rocks.

The three triangular designs, *a*, and the three anvil shapes, *b*, above them are clouds. Reading from *c* at the right edge, the subjects of the panels are: sea-water, a panel of clouds, a line of octopi, sea-water and another line of octopi. Nantjaka, at Cape Arnhem, is the totem place for all the creatures represented in the painting. Interpretation by F. M. Setzler.

* Reproduced in *Australia: Aboriginal Paintings—Arnhem Land*, 1954, Pl. XXVI.

1. Warner (1937), p. 385, describes the totemic dance of the whale in the *jiritja mara* ceremonies of the Murngin tribe.

2. This whale later went into the sky and became part of the Milky Way near the constellation of Orion, Pl. 157D.

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 OI17 Murngin OI17

The Hawksbill Turtle, Kouwaradji

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A giant *jiritja* hawksbill turtle, called *kouwaradji*, lives at Talaoi, a totemic place at the bottom of the sea, but close to the shore of southern Cape Arnhem. This turtle is greatly feared and in general his camp is strictly avoided. Should, however, an aboriginal unwittingly paddle his canoe over *kouwaradji's* camp, the turtle becomes annoyed and either creates waves so large that they upset the canoe and drown the occupant, or blows water into the sky to create heavy thunderstorms, so that they will destroy the intruder.

Kouwaradji, however, does not always drown the offenders. Sometimes he takes them under the water for a time and then allows them to come to the surface again. Although this experience makes the aborigines 'silly' for some weeks, they finally recover.

In the centre of the painted paddle, Pl. 109A, at *a*, is Talaoi, the camp of the hawksbill turtle. The black triangles are flat rocks at the totemic place, and the light-coloured triangles, coral rocks. Above and below at *b*, *b*, is the hawksbill turtle. The groups of triangular designs at the top and bottom of the paddle blade are the thunder-clouds created by the turtle when he becomes annoyed.

The Dugong, Merinjunga

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When the dugong, *merinjunga*, is disturbed by the aborigines paddling a canoe over his camp at Nangata (at the bottom of the sea, between Cape Arnhem and Port Bradshaw) he becomes annoyed and blows up so much smoke and fire that it destroys the intruders and causes heavy rainstorms to fall. As soon as this happens, the stingrays travel into the mangrove swamps to give birth to their young.[3]

Plate 109B shows the painted paddle, both sides of which are decorated similarly. The design in panel *a* is a large rain cloud created by the dugong, and the triangles on either side, smaller clouds. The dark-coloured triangle in panel *b* is a thunderstorm and the cross-hatching on either side, the rain falling from it. Similar cross-hatching in panel *c* also indicates the falling rain, which causes the stingray, centre, to go to the mangrove swamps.

The Devil-ray, Mulara, and the Hawksbill Turtle, Kouwaradji

Plate 109C, D pictures the obverse and reverse sides of the painted paddle. On panel *a* of C is the devil-ray, *mulara*, surrounded by octopi, *kundilir*. In the two panels, *b*, are queen fish, *tinimbu*, and above them again, at *c*, the clouds made by the devil-ray, *mulara*, when he becomes annoyed. The cross-hatched panels on either side are flat rocks at his totemic place near Cape Arnhem and the transverse cross-hatched panels, *f*, *f*, *f*, the waves breaking over those rocks. At *d* is the hawksbill turtle, *kouwaradji*, accompanied by his attendants, the octopi, *mainda*.

3. This myth is similar in this respect to that of the dugong and the mythical men, p. 345.

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 OE17 Muragin OE17

On the reverse side, *a* is the devil-ray, *mulara*, surrounded by octopi. At the top of the same panel are two queen fish. At *b* are two *jiritja* stingrays, *dulambou*, the cross-hatched panels surrounding them representing the sand-banks near their totemic place. There is a wet-season cloud, *baraual*, at *c*, created by the serpents, *bilumbira*, and at *d* the same clouds when the rain is falling.

The bottom of all *jiritja* paddles are similar in shape to this example. For the shape of the *dua* paddle, see Fig. 58A, B.

On this paddle, 58H, J, are engravings of the devil-ray, queen fish, crocodile, stone fish and the serpents, *bilumbira*.

On J, *a* is the devil-ray, the triangles at its tail picturing broken cumulus clouds after they have shed their rain. At *e* is the queen fish, *tinimbu*, and at *f* a wet-season cumulus cloud with rain falling from its lower edge. This cloud was created by the serpent, *bilumbira*, who can be seen travelling in it. The triangles on either side are small broken cumulus clouds. At *g* is a crocodile, *barou*, and a stone fish, *kaunbiriunja*. The transverse panels, *b*, *c*, *d*, picture rough seas, and the short lines surrounding the whole design, reefs in the sea at Cape Arnhem.

The designs on H refer to the *bilumbira* serpents hanging from the branches of the *menin* trees at Cape Arnhem after having caused the wet-season thunderstorms to form.[4] In panel *a* are two *bilumbira*, shown upside down, hanging from the branches of a *menin* tree. The male is on the left. The triangles at *b* are small clouds also created by the serpents. The queen fish, *tinimbu*, in panel *c*, is associated in some unidentified way with the northerly wind, *lunguruma*,[5] indicated by the parallel lines on either side of the fish. When the *lunguruma* wind is blowing there is a plentiful food supply.

The Serpent, Bilumbira

The serpents, *bilumbira*, are highly-coloured, dangerous creatures, with long projecting teeth. They are reputed to be over fifty feet in length. During the dry season the *bilumbira* live in a group of submerged rocks, called Daliwa, on the sea floor between Cape Arnhem and Port Bradshaw. Should anyone paddle near by, the *bilumbira* will rise to the surface and with their long teeth destroy the canoe and its occupants. Another *bilumbira* totemic place is on the north side of Cape Arnhem.

When the wet season starts, the *bilumbira* leave their home at the bottom of the sea and make the large thunder-clouds, in which they travel. The aborigines believe that the thunder is their voice and the lightning their tongues. The aborigines claim that during the wet season there are always thunder-clouds over the home of the *bilumbira* at Cape Arnhem.

Plate 112D shows a serpent travelling in a thunderstorm. On either side are young thunderstorms 'growing up', to use an aboriginal term. At the base of the 'young' thunderstorms, at *a* and *b*, the cross-hatching indicates falling rain.

4. See Pl. 112C.

5. See Yirrkalla winds, p. 133.

31 Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 Ol17 Muragin Ol17

The two stingrays, shown in the centre of the rain, are travelling to the mangrove swamps to give birth to their young.[6]

Plate 112A is another painting illustrating the myth of the *bilumbira*. The main features above and below the central line are two large thunderstorms in which three serpents are travelling. The parallel lines of cross-hatching in the four corners of the painting depict the falling rain.

Plate 112B deals with the totemic place of the *bilumbira* on the northern side of Cape Arnhem. In the lower panel are *menin* trees, and at their base four jungle-fowls (*Megapodius reinwardt*) scratching up their mounds.[7] Hanging from the branches or flying through the air are a number of the *bilumbira* serpents. The human figures are *Mokoi*.[8]

The upper panel shows similar trees with jungle-fowl mounds at their base, and birds, presumably jungle-fowls, in the branches. As in the upper panel, there are serpents flying through the air or hanging from the branches.

Plate 112C is an elaboration of the previous painting, the upper and lower right-hand panels referring to the same trees and serpents as those shown on B. In the lower right, at *a*, the two square-topped designs with the serpent entering from the left indicate the submerged rocks at Daliwa, the dry-season home of the *bilumbira*. The upper and lower left-hand panels, *c* and *d*, show additional trees with mounds at their base and, presumably, jungle-fowls in their branches. On the centre left at *b* is a *Mokoi*. The triangular section in the centre of the right-hand side of the painting refers to the swamp lands on the coast adjacent to the totemic place of the *bilumbira*. In the lower section of the triangle are unidentified birds and in the upper section, a *Mokoi* lying down, and near by a group of circles representing some unidentified fruit. More fruits are shown in the circle at *e*.

(3) Animals and Birds

The Hawk-man, Wabula, and the Butterfly-girl, Bounba

The hawk-man, *Wabula*,[9] was without a wife. One day when he was feeling particularly lonely he came across a camp of butterfly-people, *Bounba*,[10] sitting under the trees. *Wabula* was attracted by the eldest sister, resting in a special hut on one side, and made plans to capture her for his wife. Going to a nearby beach, he caught a number of lobsters, called *maitka*, cooked them and, wrapping some of them in paper-bark, returned to the camp of the butterfly-people, and offered them to the eldest sister. As she came forward to take the food

6. Myth, p. 340.
7. The jungle-fowls, by their calls, attract the *jiditja* spirits of the dead to a forest near Port Bradshaw; from there, the spirits set out on their journey to the *jintpa* heaven. Myth, p. 329.
8. These spirit people, *Mokoi*, have a totemic place on the southern side of Cape Arnhem.
9. In another myth the hawk, *wabula*, is associated with the native cat. See p. 337.
10. According to Warner (1937), p. 424, the butterfly, *burn-ba*, is closely associated with the morning star, *barnumbir*, and lives on the top of it.

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 O117 Murngin O117

*773 825 important ceremonial cycles in Arnhem Land. The serpent *aitja*,[25] the dominant ancestor in the *arawaltja* ceremony of Groote Eylandt, also created many waterholes and rivers, finally inhabiting his last creation, Jara-aua water.

Serpents in one form or another live in most of the important waterholes in Arnhem Land; others live in the thunderstorms and, travelling between the clouds, occasionally strike the earth beneath with their tongues. These serpents, under many names, are invariably associated with water, and sometimes with the rainbow.[26] They are usually highly coloured, like the rainbow, are of huge size, and often have a mane and a beard. In a few localities along the north coast of Arnhem Land, however, the heads of some serpents resemble a block of weathered stone. The mythical serpents of Arnhem Land are always dangerous to strangers who go near their waterholes, and even to those aborigines who do not perform the proper rituals before they approach the sacred places. In the Yirrkalla area a number of mythical serpents, living in the thunder-clouds, belong to rain, lightning and thunder.

● [821]

The Lightning Snake, Wununga

*773 825 821 The lightning snakes, *wununga*,[27] who live in the sky during the wet season, can often be seen passing from one cloud to another in the form of lightning. During the dry season the *wununga* take on the form of one of the dangerous snakes of the jungle, who, before they bite an aboriginal, eat the leaves of the *menin* vine to make their venom more deadly. The young of the *wununga* also live in the jungle, but when adult they, like their parents, go into the sky during the rainy season.

*773 *532 Plate 117A shows two *wununga* snakes passing from one cloud to another. The light grey figures at the top of the painting are three thunder-clouds, from the bottom of which rain is falling (parallel cross-hatched lines). The thick black vertical band, *a*, in the lower panel represents the wet-season wind, *bara*.

Plate 117C shows three *wununga* snakes in a jungle, eating the leaves of the *menin* vine. The triangular symbols on the borders represent the clouds in which the snakes live. The three serpents have their heads in the branches of the *menin* vine (central design).

The Crocodiles, Baron, at Caledon Bay

*773 825 In early times the crocodiles, *baron*, left the Roper River country and travelled northward until they reached the swamps at Blue Mud Bay. As these were extensive and well stocked with food, most of the crocodiles decided to remain there. Some of them were not satisfied with the conditions at Blue Mud Bay so, accompanied by the blanket lizard, *baltjira* (*Chamydosaurus kingii*), they

25. Myth, p. 27.

26. Warner (1937), p. 311, relates a myth about a serpent which causes floods and whose body is the rainbow.

27. See painted sacred object of the serpent, *wununga*, Pl. 134A. The serpent wununga is also present in the myths and ceremonies of Milingimbi, p. 447.

31 Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 OI17 Murngin OI17

lower section is the open sea, as viewed from above. The dark cross-hatched areas indicate the sandy sea bottom, and the light-coloured areas the sea. The creatures are stingrays, the crescent-shaped marks on their bodies being masses of fat which the aborigines value as food.*

Trial Bay

Plate 120D pictures the surroundings at a *dua* totemic spot near Trial Bay. At *a* on the lower right-hand panel are two green turtles, *gariwa*, and the sea-urchins (circles), on which they feed. The top turtle has a black seagull resting on its back and the one below, a white bird.[49] The next panel, *b*, shows rocks, Marin, which project above the water at Trial Bay. The vertical cross-hatched band to the left represents the waves beating against the rocks, and the black panel, *f*, another totemic rock, Nangi, the panels of chevron designs on either side of *f* symbolizing the rays of the sun. In the extreme left panel *e* are bone fish, *warawanda*, and a row of sea-urchins.

The Milungwira Swamps and the Men, Laitjun and Bourngauwili

The Milungwira swamp, situated north of Blue Mud Bay at the mouth of the River Girituwi, is an important totemic place in the *jiritja* mythology. It is associated with the mythical man *Laitjun*,[50] another man, *Bourngauwili*, a dingo, *dulairuju*, a water-snake, *gamarana*, and a rat, *nik-nik*.[51]

Four bark paintings are associated with Milungwira and its totemic inhabitants.

Plate 121B pictures the Milungwira swamp and the man, *Bourngauwili*, who with his dog, *dulairuju*, had set out to hunt the rat, *nik-nik*, and yellow water-snake, *gamarana*. In the lower left panel *a* is the dog, *dulairuju*, and in the upper right panel *c* the rat, *nik-nik*, swimming through a swamp covered with the leaves of water-lilies, *jouku*. The meandering lines behind *nik-nik* indicate where it has pushed the lily leaves aside. The upper left and lower right-hand panels *b* and *d* illustrate those parts of the swamp which are covered with water-lily leaves. The bulbs of the lilies are an important aboriginal food. The eight small circles, *e*, *e*, on the outer edge of the design are subsidiary swamps, Mailuju, where small bamboos, used by the aborigines for spear shafts, grow in abundance. The circle in the centre of the painting is the dry-season home of the yellow water-snake, *gamarana*, which no aboriginal will go near. During the wet season these snakes leave their waterhole, go into the sky and create the rain, the thunderstorms and the lightning.[52] The four birds are herons, *balir*; the tracks on the right-hand

* Reproduced in *Australia: Aboriginal Paintings—Arnhem Land*, 1954, Pl. XXII.

49. It is not an unusual sight in the Gulf of Carpentaria to see a bird resting on the back of a basking turtle. The resting bird indicates to the aborigines that the turtle is on the surface.

50. See myth of *Banaitja* and *Laitjun*, p. 279.

51. *Nik-nik* was the 'dog' of the woman, *Mahenlwi*. See carved figure, Pl. 133D, and myth, p. 131.

52. This appears to be a parallel myth to that of the *bilumbira* of Cape Arnhem, p. 351.

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 OI17 Murngin OI17

edge, those made by the mythical man as he walked to Milungwira, and those on the left, where he returned.

Plate 121A refers to the dog, *dulairuju*, and his pursuit of the rat, *nik-nik*, in the Milungwira swamp. On the top edge of the painting is a line of dog tracks. Below them are four white herons surrounded by their footprints. At *a* is a male and female dog, each holding a rat, *nik-nik*, in its mouth; the male dog, *dulairuju*, is on the left. Below is a transverse panel, *b*, of dingoes and their tracks. The central panel, *c*, is swamp grass, the home of *nik-nik*. At *d* is a panel of dingo tracks, and at *e* another panel of five dingoes. In the middle of panel *f* the rat, *nik-nik*, is hiding from the dog in the middle of a thicket of swamp grass; *g* is a line of five white herons, *balir*, and their tracks.

On Pl. 121C the bulk of the painting consists of sinuous bands (running water), joined by straight lines (ripples on the surface of the water). The rectangle in the middle of the lower panel is the swamp, Milungwira. In its upper section four cormorants (*Phalacrocorax* sp.) are chasing four fish, called *bilda*. In the panel below are more cormorants. The transverse bands indicate subsidiary swamps at Milungwira. Reading from the left, the figures on the bottom panel are: three clouds, *balda*, the mythical man, *Laitjun*, four frogs, and five logs lying in the water of the swamp.[53]

Plate 121D is another bark painting associated with the topography of Milungwira. The top cross-hatched band, *a*, is the bed of the river, Girituwi, in which there are many waterfalls and rapids. The fish-shaped design in the lower panel is a totemic rock, called Tikorora, whose bottom, according to the myth, is in the mud and whose top is in the clouds. The four short transverse lines of lozenge-shaped designs above and below Tikorora indicate whirlpools which form at its base during heavy rains.

The Island, Garabi

Garabi is a string of small islands outside Caledon Bay, all belonging to the *jiritja* moiety. In creation times, when the creatures were men, the islands were the home of the hump-backed whale, *morokundja*, the stingray, *barindjinou*, the queen fish, *tinimbu*, the crocodile, *barou*, and the hawksbill turtle, *kouwaradji*. Later these mythical beings transformed themselves into creatures which still frequent Garabi and their bodies into natural features in the adjacent country. The whales are two rugged islands, part of the Garabi chain. They also went into the sky and became a section of the Milky Way,[54] near the constellation of Orion.

During those early times the crocodile man, *Barou*, murdered one of the stingray people. When the head man of the stingrays heard of the murder, he met and fought the crocodile, finally wounding him with the spear he now carries in his tail. This fight made everything square and established the first *makaraka*.

53. Interpretation by F. D. McCarthy.
54. See astronomical myth of Orion and the Pleiades, p. 498.

and those to the left, dark-coloured nimbus clouds. The curving lines across the back of the figure (Pl. 130F) represent the thin black stratus clouds, *taioutbut*, which often form in the sky after a thunderstorm has expended itself. The curved panels across the abdomen of the figure are waves made by *Tjambuwal* as he wades through the water in pursuit of the rock cod, *akurata*. The long penis on both figures represents the long curving banners of rain that fall from the base of the thunderstorms.

The Club, Burungunda. Plate 130D is the double-ended club,[29] *burungunda*, with which *Tjambuwal* strikes the cliff at Jalboa headland at the beginning of the wet season. The impact shatters the club into many fragments; these fragments enter the ground and later become the edible yam, *bualku*, which is called *bawal* in the Arnhem Bay area (Pl. 131E).

The Spear, Larapan. Plate 130J is the spear, *larapan*. With this spear *Tjambuwal* transfixes the rock cod, *akurata*, before he leaves his cloud and enters the sea to kill it.[30]

When the aborigines see a meteor speed across the sky they believe its fiery path is created by *Tjambuwal's* spear, *larapan*. The white head of the spear is the meteor itself, and the dots on its head, the white hailstones, *milarik*, at the Jalboa headland (Pl. 91E). The shaft of the spear is curved to represent the path of the meteor.

The Club, Barlait. Plate 130C illustrates the club, *barlait*, used by *Tjambuwal* to kill the rock cod, *akurata*, after he has speared it. On both sides of the club is a painting of the thunder-man with a club in each hand.[31] The curving groups of cross-hatching represent the clouds, *wulmu*.

The Ceremonial Object, Munan. The aborigines believe the curved clouds, *wulmu*, always rest on the head of *Tjambuwal*, the thunder-man (Pl. 90D). These clouds are represented in the *dua* ceremonies by a boomerang-shaped piece of wood called the *munan*.

Plate 130G illustrates the obverse side of the *munan*. Reading from the right, panel *a* indicates new clouds forming after a thunderstorm, and panels *b*, *c* and *d*, clouds which are heavy with rain.

On the reverse side, Pl. 130H, reading from the right, the curving cross-hatched lines, *a*, symbolize the white tops of clouds, and the black rectangle, *b*, a dark-coloured nimbus cloud about to discharge its rain. On the next panel, *c*, the parallel longitudinal lines picture falling rain; the curving lines on the next panel, *d*, more clouds; and the parallel lines, *e*, spent thunder-clouds developing afresh.

The Yam, Bualku or Bawal. In the Yirrkalla myth, the fragments of the *burungunda* club, on entering the ground, are changed into a yam called *bualku*. In the *Tjambuwal* myth of Arnhem Bay (p. 289) the same yam is called *bawal*.

29. Elkin and the Berndts (1950), Pl. 6A and p. 44, figure and describe this club as a yam.
30. The myth, p. 284, relates that the stench of the decaying fish, ascending into the sky, creates more thunder-clouds.
31. See also bark painting, Pl. 90B.

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 Ol17 Muragin Ol17

another yam, *banumin*. But each woman became so engrossed in her own dance that she forgot about the other, and travelled in a different direction from that of her companion. *Bunbulama* finished her dance at Melville Bay where, in company with her husband, *W'ulunuit*,[58] they now entertain the spirits of *dua* dead whilst they are on their way to Purelko.[59] *Muralunangau*, on the other hand, danced her way to Bremer Island. But when *Muralunangau* was making camp she noticed the flowers with which she had decorated herself had all wilted. She became so sad and wept so violently that the sound of her grief caused the *timaru* wind to blow.[60]

At the present time, when the rainy season is nearing its end the women in the camp wail in unison, believing that the sound of their grief, like that of *Muralunangau*, will cause the wet-season wind, *barn*, to stop and the *timaru* wind to blow.[61]

The white cap on the head of *Muralunangau*, Pl. 136B, D, indicates the paint used when she decorated herself in readiness for her dance with *Bunbulama*. The yellow face on Pl. 136D is symbolic of the colour of the totemic clay-pan of the woman at Bremer Island. The black rectangle at *a*, Pl. 136B, is *Muralunangau's* carrying-bag. The cross-hatched panels on *Muralunangau's* body indicate falling rain.[62]

The Winds of Yirrkalla. Barn is a north-westerly *dua* wind which continues throughout the rainy season, extending from November to March. This is a time of scarcity for the aborigines, because the continuous rains, high humidity and heavy storms not only spoil most of the food, but prevent fishing.

Timaru, another *dua* wind, blows from the east-south-east and immediately succeeds the *barn*. The plants start to bear fruit and the underground tubers to mature during the period of this wind. The mythical woman, *Muralunangau*, of Bremer Island was responsible for the first *timaru* wind.[63] As mentioned previously, the aboriginal women endeavour to start the *timaru* wind by means of concerted wailing.

The *jiritja* wind, *lungurunu*, which blows from a northerly direction, is sent to the aborigines of Yirrkalla by the spirits of the *jiritja* 'heaven', Nalkuna. *Lungurunu* brings many coco-nuts, lengths of bamboo and sometimes even Melanesian canoes;[64] all of these are looked upon by the Yirrkalla aborigines as gifts from the spirits of Nalkuna.[65] Food is plentiful during the period of this wind.

58. See myth associated with bark figure of *Bunbulama*, Pl. 65C, D.
59. See myth, journey of *dua* dead, p. 325. 60. See details of Groote Eylandt winds, p. 94.
61. The *timaru* is the wind following the wet season, a time of scarcity. It ushers in a period when the fruits start to ripen and the underground tubers mature.
62. As there is no mention of rain in the myth of *Muralunangau* it is not clear why these designs are painted on her body.
63. See myth of woman, *Muralunangau*, p. 433. 64. See carved pipe, p. 308.
65. Berndt (1948), p. 94, mentions that 'at the time of the north-east winds [no doubt *lungurunu*], just after the wet monsoonal season, coco-nuts, canes, long pods, bread fruit and timber, with an occasional canoe (including some of the outrigger variety) are washed up on the mainland beaches and are said to have been sent by the spirits that inhabit Badu.' Berndt's Badu is my Nalkuna.

3: Mountford E-S (1948) 1956 C617 Muragin C617

6

ASTRONOMY

THE AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINES, whose knowledge of the night sky is far greater than that of most white men, have surrounded the heavenly bodies with a maze of stories.

Although the writers of the last century, Smyth,[1] Squires,[2] Ridley[3] and others, gathered much information about aboriginal astronomy, few later writers have done so. Macgraith[4] has published a detailed and valuable description of the astronomy of the Aranda and Luritja tribes of Central Australia; Mountford[5] has recorded a myth of Orion and the Pleiades from the Adnjamatana tribe of South Australia, and later,[6] more detailed information on the astronomy of the Pitjendadjara tribe of western Central Australia.

In Arnhem Land the aboriginal men appeared to have an extensive knowledge of the major stars, the planets and some of the inconspicuous star groups.[7] They have depicted, on sheets of bark, many of the myths relating to these heavenly bodies. Although there are some resemblances between the myths of Milingimbi and Yirrkalla, those of Oenpelli, Groote Eylandt and Yirrkalla show wide differences.

1. GROOTE EYLANDT

The Constellation of the Crab, Unwala

The aboriginal constellation of the crab, *Unwala*, an unmarried sky-man living by himself, is a group of small stars at the head of Hydra. This constellation is an example of how small, inconspicuous star groups form part of the aboriginal astronomy, while adjacent first and second magnitude stars, like Procyon and Regulus, are apparently disregarded.

Plate 150A is the painting of the mud crab, *Unwala*. It is, in fact, almost a duplicate of the design on Pl. 9B, which deals with the ancestral crabs at Bickerton Island.

The Milky Way

The Groote Eylandt aborigines look upon the Milky Way, *alaluma*, as a sky river in whose waters are many large fish and a multitude of water-lily bulbs. It is from this river that the star-people gather their food. All the stars in the section of the Milky Way west of a line drawn between the Southern Cross and

1. Smyth (1878), pp. 131-4.
2. Squires (n.d.), pp. 11 61.
3. Ridley (1875), pp. 141-2.
4. Macgraith (1932), pp. 19-20.
5. Mountford (1939), pp. 103-4.
6. Mountford (1940), pp. 151-7.
7. Macgraith (1932), p. 20, noticed the same characteristics among the aborigines of Central Australia.

[P. 478 contains no Text]

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 OI17 Murngin OI17

The Walagugu and the Tjirupun

171

The Southern Cross, the Pointers and a number of adjacent small stars within that part of the Milky Way make up the aboriginal constellation of *Tjirupun*[11] and the *Walagugu*, with the respective families. *Tjirupun* lives with his numerous wives and children in a round grass hut, and the *Walagugu* camp in the open. These star-people live exclusively on the water-lily bulbs they collect in the nearby Milky Way.

The man, *Tjirupun*, is the large white circle in the centre of Pl. 155C, the remainder of the circles being his family, the larger his wives and the smaller his children. The four outer stars are the *Walagugu*, *a*, *a*, being the men and *b*, *b*, their wives. The parallel lines joining these stars to the main design are tracks made by the *Walagugu* as they travelled to and from the Milky Way in search of food.

None of the individual stars in this painting was specifically identified, but it seems likely that the *Walagugu* are the four stars of the Southern Cross and *Tjirupun* and his family the many stars in the nearby Milky Way.

3. MILINGIMBI

The Moon-man, Alinda

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At the time of creation the moon-man, *Alinda*, who lived at Tutula at the mouth of the Liverpool River,[12] had two wives, each of whom had borne him a son. One day when the wives were out gathering food, *Alinda* sent the boys to catch some fish while he stayed in camp to complete a large carrying-bag he was making.

The youths did not catch any fish but, on a nearby lagoon, speared a whistling duck which, instead of taking back to their father as they should have done, they cooked and ate on the spot. On their return they told their father they had not caught any fish, but said nothing about the duck they had eaten. However, the moon-man was a shrewd old fellow and knew from the grease on the boys' hands that they had recently eaten flesh of some sort, so he said:

'If you haven't caught any food, how did you get that grease on your fingers?'

Although the lads denied having eaten anything, they could not explain their dirty hands.

After *Alinda* had berated them for both their greed and deceitfulness, the boys lay down in their camp and went to sleep. *Alinda*, seeing this and still angry over the behaviour of his sons, lifted them carefully and pushed them into his carrying-bag. Finding themselves imprisoned, the lads first screamed and kicked frantically, then confessed their misdeeds, promising that, if only their

11. This name is similar to that used by the aborigines of north-eastern Arnhem Land for the constellation of Orion, p. 190.
12. Map, Fig. 1.

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 O117 Murngin O117

father would release them, they would always bring back any food they had caught. But the moon-man was adamant, and tying up the end of his carrying-bag and putting it on his shoulder, loaded it into his canoe and, paddling until almost out of sight of land, threw the bag overboard. 773* 821

While all this was going on the wives of *Alinda* were digging yams in the jungle. On reaching camp in the late afternoon they saw *Alinda* sitting in his bark hut, but there was no sign of their sons. They asked *Alinda* where they had gone and he replied gruffly that they were out hunting and would not be back that evening. When further questioning brought only evasive answers the wives became suspicious.

Waiting until their husband was asleep, the women, by following the tracks of both their sons and *Alinda*, soon found out what had happened; they learned that the boys, unsuccessful in their fishing, had caught and eaten a whistling duck, carefully hiding the bones in the grass; then they had returned to camp but, as far as the women could see, had not left it again. They also saw the deep tracks of *Alinda*, indicating he was carrying a heavy load, marks where he had launched his canoe and others where he had beached it again, returning with light tracks to his hut. From this evidence the women deduced that *Alinda* had taken their sons out in his canoe and drowned them.

In their anger the wives of *Alinda* set fire to the hut in which their husband was sleeping, rejoicing as they saw him die in great pain amid the burning logs and bark. But even as they watched, the women saw the dead body of *Alinda* come to life, change into a thin crescent, grow into a large silvery sphere, like the moon of today, and climb to the top of a high tree. From that lofty position the moon-man spoke to everyone, to the fish, the birds, the animals and to man.

'I have decreed,' said he, 'that from this time onward the whole of creation will die, and once dead, will never live again. I and I alone, except for three days each month, will live forever.'

Birima, of the fish-people, objected strongly to this decree, but after much argument was finally silenced.

Since that time it has been as the moon decreed. *Alinda* dies every month for three days, comes to life, grows progressively larger for a fortnight, then sickens and dies again. But the rest of creation, once dead, remain dead forever. At full moon, the aborigines will point out a mark across his middle, the scar from the burn which he received so long ago at the hands of his wives.

In Pl. 155A is the pictorial representation of the moon myth. The two human figures on the lower left are the sons of *Alinda* whom he had drowned for their misdeeds. The rectangular design toward the upper right is the grass carrying-bag in which the moon-man imprisoned his sons. The rectangle (upper left) represents the bark hut where *Alinda* was burned to death. The black circle is the moon, the parallel lines in the middle section, the flames of the fire, and the curving lines at the top of the hut, the smoke. The snake-like figures on 532* 773* 821

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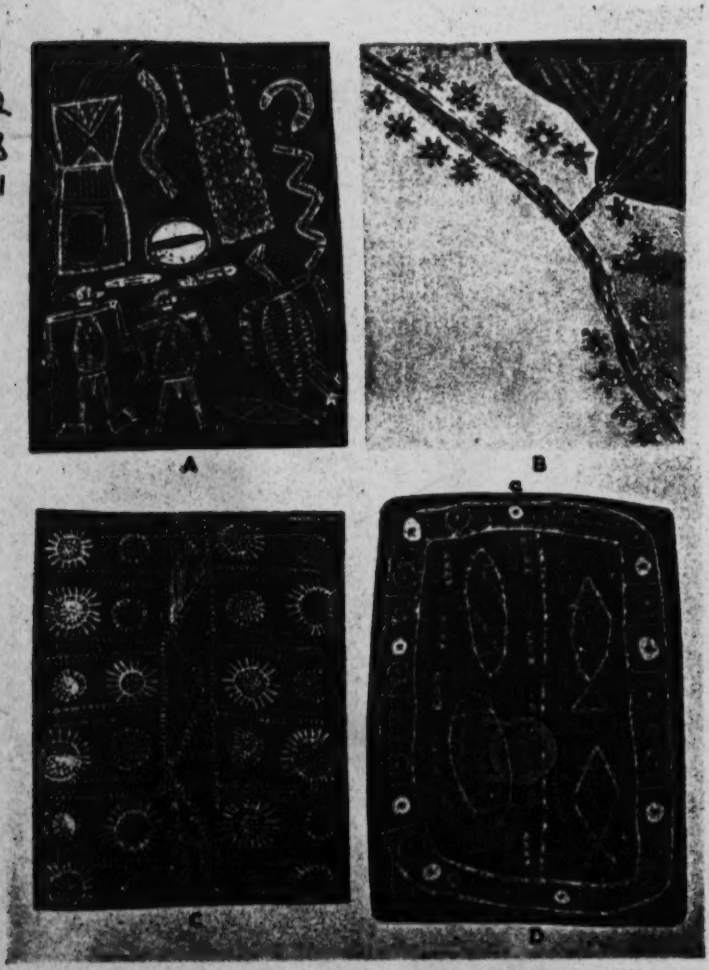

PLATE 153. Bark paintings, astronomical, Yirrkalla and Oenpelli

A The Moon-man B The Milky Way and Coal Sack, Oenpelli
C The Milky Way, Milingimbi D The opossum-man, Kapali

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 OI17 Murngin OI17

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either side of the carrying-bag of *Alinda* are yams the women collected. On the lower right is the whistling duck which the boys caught and ate. One of the two fish-brothers, *Birima*, is on the lower right and the other to the left of the burning hut. *Alinda* is shown on the upper right as a crescent, the new moon, and in the centre, the full moon, as a white circle with a black mark across it, symbolic of the burn he received.

The Milky Way

The aborigines of Milingimbi, as elsewhere in Arnhem Land, look upon the Milky Way as a celestial stream from which the sky people gather their food.

Plate 155C is a much conventionalized picture of the Milky Way. The central transverse design, with the zigzag line passing from end to end, is the main portion of the Milky Way, while the rectangles on each side are either isolated portions of the galaxy or branches of it. The circles with radiating lines are some of the bright stars within the Milky Way. The artist explained that the transverse design also represented the main stream of the heavens; the rectangles, branches and backwaters of that stream; and the stars, large fish and turtles living in it.

[136]

PLATE 154. The pearly nautilus

The Opossum-man, Kapali

During the early days of the world an old opossum-man, *Kapali*, his wives, two crow-women, *Tjakara* and *Wapanpri*, with their brother, *Inua*, lived on the sea coast south of Elcho Island.[13]

At the time the story opens old *Kapali*, having had a quarrel with his wives, paddled to Elcho Island, leaving the women and their brother behind in the

13. Map, Fig. 1.

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 OII7 Muragin OII7

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camp. As food was getting scarce in the jungle, the three crow-people built a fish-trap at the mouth of a nearby stream, which one of them visited every morning, returning with their baskets full of a fish called *laimon*. These they would cook and eat, littering the ground around them with discarded vertebrae.

When the old opossum-man returned from Elcho Island, tired from his long journey in the canoe, he asked his wives for something to eat, but they refused, saying rudely that if he wanted food he had better get some for himself. *Kapali*, after abusing the women for their rudeness, sat down beside his fire to warm himself and went to sleep. On seeing this the women, scooping up the hot coals and burning wood from the campfire, threw them over old *Kapali*. Screaming, the old man rushed into the sea to ease the pain, while the women, realizing that vengeance awaited them, hid themselves in the jungle.

Inma was at the fish-trap when he heard the commotion and cries of pain. Guessing what was wrong and not wishing to be involved in a domestic quarrel, he ran back to camp, joined the discarded fish vertebrae end on end to make a long ladder and climbed into the sky, pulling the ladder up after him so that no one could follow.

The opossum-man, having recovered somewhat from his wounds, went to his relatives, the fish-people, and told them about the injuries he had received at the hands of his wives, the crow-women. The mullet, the barramundi and the cat-fish men were so angry over the ill-treatment of their relative that they formed themselves into an avenging party, surrounded the camp of the women, speared them to death and buried them in the jungle. Next day, when the crow-people called in a visit, they could not find the women until a closer search revealed evidence of the avenging party and the bodies of the murdered women.

When *Inma* first heard about the death of his sisters, he would not believe that *Kapali* would have allowed an avenging party to kill his wives when a good beating would have been quite as effective. But after the crow-people had told *Inma* what they had seen the broken spears, the blood-stained ground and the dead bodies he was convinced. So, descending to earth on his ladder of fish-bones, he brought his sisters to life, carried them into the sky and changed them to stars.

From that day so long ago the brother and the two sisters have remained in the sky, living happily on the banks of the Milky Way. Every day they go out collecting water lily bulbs and catching fish, and every night sit quietly among the stars, safe from the vengeance of *Kapali*, the old opossum-man.

The whole design of Pl. 153D represents the stars in the southern portion of the Milky Way adjacent to the constellations of Lupus and Scorpio, those in the outer border being the larger ones. The fish on the lower right is the barramundi, and the one above, the mullet, both of whom assisted in the killing of the two women. The oval designs on the left are baskets used by the women to carry

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 Oil7 Murngin Oil7

fish from the trap to the camp. These are now isolated parts of the Milky Way, near the constellation of Argo. Fish-bones scattered within the design, once thrown away by *Inua* and his sisters, are small stars in the Milky Way, and the vertical dotted line across the middle, the track between the camp and fish-trap. The white star at *a* is the brother, *Anua*, and those at *b* and *c* the two wives of *Kapali*. These three stars form the aboriginal constellation of *Kainju*.

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Orion and the Pleiades

All the stars Orion, the Hyades, the Pleiades, those between these constellations and many others stretching far into the northern and southern sky are included in the aboriginal constellation of *Tjilulpuna*. This constellation, known also as the 'canoe stars', covers a large area of the evening sky during the wet season, from December until March. Every night during that time the men, *Tjilulpuna*, paddle their canoe along the 'river' (Milky Way), fishing as they go.

In this attractive painting, Pl. 155A, the main design is the canoe, the projections at the bow and stern being the small platforms on which the aborigines stand to spear fish. The paddles are the long lines of stars stretching far out to the north and the south. They include, on one side, some of the stars of the Gemini, and on the other side, of Eridinus. The three stars at the left-hand end of the canoe (the belt of Orion) are the three men, *Tjilulpuna*; those at the other end of the canoe (the Pleiades) are their wives. The fish within the canoe is the constellation of the Hyades. The star groups representing the fish in the sea were not identified, but are most likely part of the Milky Way.

4. VIRRAMALA

The Moon-man, Alinda

In creation times the moon-man, *Alinda*, and the parrot-fish man, *Birima*, were always disagreeing over some trivial matter. During one unusually violent quarrel, each picked up his clubs and belaboured the other so badly that both died. Then the spirit of the moon-man, *Alinda*, said to the spirit of the parrot-fish, *Birima*:

'You are to become a parrot-fish and live in the sea, and when you die, you'll never come to life again, but I am going to be the moon in the sky, and although I'll die like the rest of you, I'll only be dead for three days, then I'll live again.'

So, from that time onwards, the parrot-fish and the whole of creation, once dead, never again came to life. But although, each month, the moon becomes thinner and thinner until he finally dies, after three days he again shows as a silver streak which grows progressively larger until it reaches its full size.

The aborigines brought me the empty shell of the pearly nautilus (*Nautilus pompilius*) which they said was the skeleton of the dead moon. Pl. 151.

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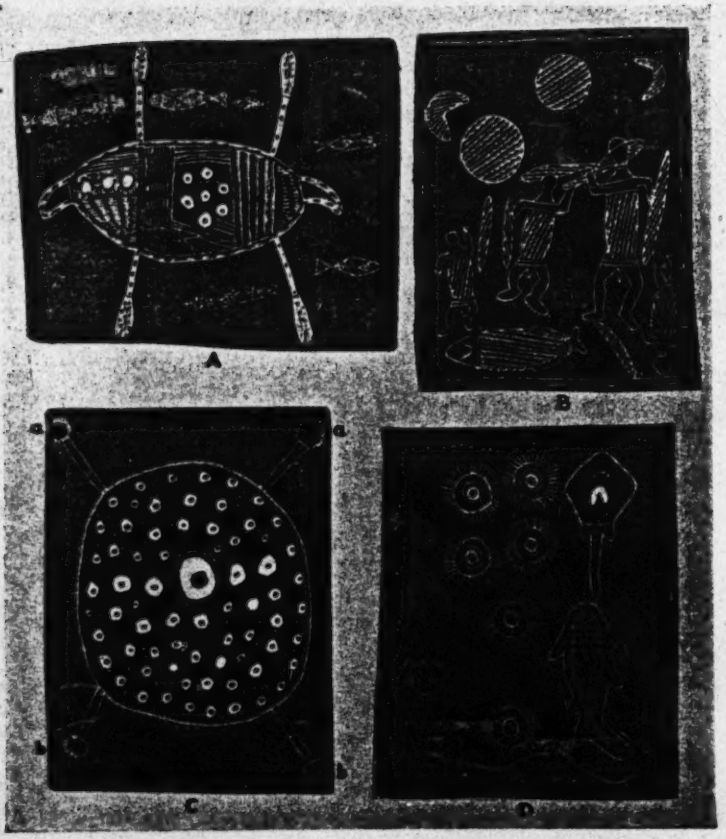

PLATE 155. Bark paintings, astronomical, Yirrkalla and Oenpelli
A Orion and the Pleiades B The Moon-man
C Walagugu and the Tjirupun D The Southern Cross and the Pointers

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 O117 Murngin O117

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Warner[14] has a variant of this myth, in which it is the parrot-fish who decides that, when he dies, he will remain dead. The aborigines contend that the parrot-fish was a 'silly fool'.

Plate 155B illustrates the legend of the moon-man, *Alinda*, and the parrot-fish man, *Dirima*. In the centre are the two opponents belabouring each other with clubs; on the lower left is the dead parrot-fish with his weapon lying beside him, and on the lower right, the dead moon. The parrot-fish is depicted on the lower left, and the moon, in its various phases, near the upper edge.

The Moon, Nalimba

The aborigines believe that in the early days of the world the moon, *Nalimba*, was a man who spent much of his time collecting a yam-like plant, *waralki*. His sister, a dugong-woman, *Balaeokman*, who lived in and around the swamps near by, collected *rakia*, the spike-rush, for food. One day the dugong-woman was searching for *rakia* when she inadvertently walked through some itch weed which, once her skin became dry, set up an intense irritation. She tried many remedies, but without success, until in sheer desperation she dived into the sea. Finding that water stopped the itching, she said to the moon-man:

'I'm going to change myself into a dugong, and stay in the sea forever.'

'If you do,' said the moon, 'I'll live always in the sky.'

So, true to his word, *Nalimba* left the earth, taking the yams, *waralki*, with him.

One day, as the dugong was sleeping on the surface of the water, two pandamus-tree men, *Garun-garun*, decided to kill her for food. But just as they were about to do so a large wave breaking on the beach frightened the dugong away. The *Garun-garun*, in disgust, transformed themselves into pandanus trees.

Since then the moon has lived in the sky, the dugong in the ocean, and the pandanus tree on the edge of the sea and the watercourses.

At the same time, associated in some way not ascertained with the moon and the dugong, there was a man, *Guripun*, who with his young wife was collecting *rakia*. They were tying it up in bundles when the string broke, scattering the *rakia* everywhere. That *rakia* now grows in many of the swamps of Arnhem Land. Disgusted by their misfortune, the couple went into the sky and became the stars Arcturus (Alpha Bootes) and Saak (Eta Bootes). When the star Arcturus appears in the eastern sky the aborigines know that the *rakia* is mature and ready to collect.

Connected with the myth of the moon, *Nalimba*, is a belief, similar to that held by the Groote Eylandters,[15] of an association between the moon and the tides. When the moon is new or full, and sets respectively at sunset or sunrise,

[171] [823]

14. Warner (1937), p. 523. There are several other myths of Arnhem Land that explain the origin of death: the moon-man, *Alinda*, p. 193; the native-cat, *Bararumu*, p. 257; and the myth recorded by Berndt (1948a), pp. 46-50, which bears some resemblance to that of *Nalimba*, the moon man, p. 185. In the Berndt version, belonging to the *pitja* moiety, however, it is the dugong which brings death to the world.

15. See Groote Eylandt myth, p. 181.

[114]

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 OII7 Murngin OII7

the tides are high. When the moon is in the zenith at sunrise or sunset, the tides are low. The aborigines, noting these facts, believe that the high tides running into the full and new moon make it fat and round. When the tides are low the water pours into the sea beneath and the moon becomes thin.

Plate 156D illustrates the myth of the moon, the dugong, the man, *Guripan*, and his wife. The moon, *Nalimba*, is the central semicircle. Above, the three torpedo-shaped figures are the yams, *wuralki*, which he took into the sky with him. The stars on either side of the moon represent the man *Guripan* and his wife, whose misfortune was responsible for the plentiful supply of *takia*.

On the right of the lower panel is the dugong woman, *Baluwokman*, and on the left the footmarks of the pandanus-tree men, *Guran-guran*. The cross-hatching in the lower panel symbolizes the large wave breaking on the beach, frightening the dugong just as the pandanus-tree men were about to spear it.

Plate 156C deals with the same myth, but with less detail. Again the torpedo-like designs are the yams, *wuralki*, taken into the sky by *Nalimba*. The moon, as a crescent in the first quarter, is called *moilboni*, and as a disc, lower left, is *lamark*. The cross-hatched ring, which is regarded as the wet-weather camp of the moon, represents the halo commonly seen round the moon during misty weather.

The Southern Cross and Pointers, Baluing

The Southern Cross and Pointers are looked upon as a stingray (the Cross) being eternally pursued round the southern sky by a shark (the Pointers). The myth is associated with Caledon Bay.

In Pl. 155D the four upper stars in the painting (the Southern Cross) represent a stingray, and the two lower stars (the Pointers) a shark, which is chasing the stingray. These creatures are shown to the right. The wide difference between the myths of the Southern Cross at Yirrkalla and Groote Eylandt[16] less than one hundred and twenty miles apart indicates a minimum of social contacts between the two tribes.

The Milky Way, Milinwin

In creation times the Milky Way, *milinwin*, was a watercourse near Blue Mud Bay.

At that time two brothers, *Nungumiri*, the elder, and *Jikuwuna*, the younger, went fishing in a bark canoe. When near Woodah Island[17] they caught a rock cod, *guruka*, and were on their long homeward journey when a heavy storm sprang up. A large wave fell aboard, badly straining the frail bark canoe and filling it with water. The next wave, breaking the canoe in halves, left the brothers struggling in the sea. For many hours the two brothers swam towards the distant mainland. Then the arms of the younger brother became so swollen he had forgotten to remove his arm-bands—that he finally collapsed and was

16. Groote Island myth, p. 185. 17. Map, Fig. 1.

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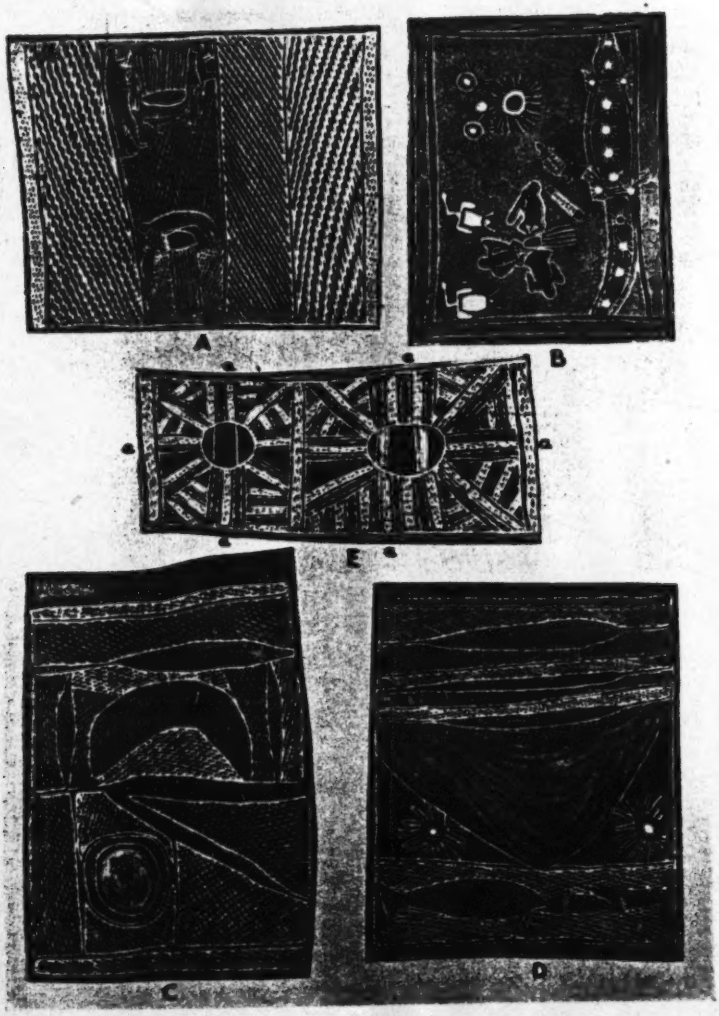

PLATE 156. Bark paintings, astronomical, Yirrkalla
A The Magellan Clouds B The crocodile, the opossum and the ibis-men
C, D The Moon-man E The Sun-woman

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 OII7 Murngin OII7

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drowned. The elder brother kept swimming until he reached a low rock near the shore of the northern end of Blue Mud Bay. But his limbs were so stiff and he was so exhausted by his long swim that he could not reach the shore. Later, their bodies were found on a pebbly beach at the northern end of Blue Mud Bay. When the ants saw what had happened they travelled in long lines to the bodies and bit them all over, hoping to bring them to life,[18] but were unsuccessful. The record of this mishap, which formed the basis for two aboriginal bark paintings, can be seen in and around the Milky Way.

Plate 157C deals with the terrestrial story of the two brothers, and 157A with the celestial.

In Pl. 157C the two brothers, in their canoe, are shown in the upper left-hand panel, with the rock cod they captured immediately below them. At *a* is the elder brother, *Nungumiri*; at *b*, the younger brother, *Jikunana*; and panel *c*, the pebbly beach on which the dead men were found. The central panel, *d*, represents the watercourse at Blue Mud Bay, now the Milky Way. The parallel and the wavy lines, *e*, indicate the wake of the fish, and *f*, that of the canoe. The parallel transverse lines to the right of the elder brother, *a*, and to the left of the younger, *b*, are the ants travelling to the dead bodies to try and bring them to life. Other vertical lines of black and white dots are ants travelling to the right armpit of the younger brother, *b*, and the left hand of the elder, *a*, respectively. The younger brother is wearing the arm-bands which caused his death.

The two brothers, the fish and the canoe are dark starless spaces in the Milky Way, in the region of Scorpio. The wake of the fish, the canoe, the pebbly beach and the ants are either small stars or nebulae in or adjacent to the Milky Way.

Plate 157A, the celestial story, shows the brothers in the sky, the younger on the left. The rock on which the elder brother landed is the black mark immediately below him. The central panel tells the story of the tragic canoe journey. To the left are the brothers in the canoe, and in the centre the swamped canoe with the brothers struggling in the water. The men and the canoe have all become celestial features. The two men are dark patches in the Milky Way, the younger within the constellation of Serpens, the elder near Sagittarius. The rock on which the elder brother landed is a portion of the Milky Way, near Theta Serpens, and the canoe, a line of four small stars near Antares. The meandering lines which form the upper and lower panels, representing the wake of the fish and the canoe, are luminous portions of the Milky Way, near Scorpio, while the stars in the central panel are either included in or adjacent to the Milky Way.

Orion and the Pleiades

At Yirrkalla, the constellation of Orion is believed to be a canoe full of *jiritja* men, called the *Tjirilpan*, with their wives, the Pleiades, in another canoe.

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18. The bites of ants are often used by the aboriginal magicians to restore their victims to life. See Warner (1937), p. 294.

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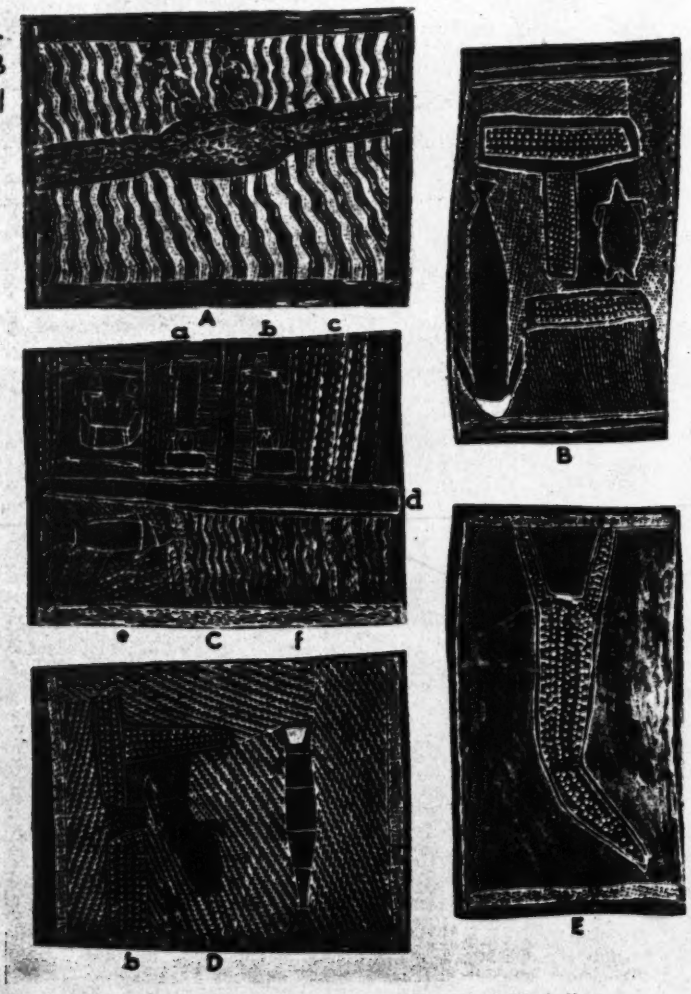

PLATE 157. Bark paintings, astronomical, Yirrkalla
A, C The Milky Way B, D Orion and the Pleiades E The Scorpion

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 OI17 Muragin OI17

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These men and their wives, who came from a land far away to the east, paddled towards the north-eastern shores of Arnhem Land. The men succeeded in catching a turtle and the women two large fish, *kouper*, which they loaded into their respective canoes.

When the *Tjirilpan* and their wives were nearing Cape Arnhem a heavy storm swamped both canoes and drowned all the people. The two canoes, the men, the women, the turtle, the two fish they had caught and a whale, *morokundja*,[19] from Cape Arnhem, are now in the sky, where they can be seen throughout the whole of the wet season. The men are the constellation of Orion, the women the Pleiades; the fish, the turtle and the whale are nearby unidentified parts of the Milky Way. The turtle, the fish and the whale are also large rocks in the sea near Cape Arnhem.

Plate 157B is a companion painting of the constellation of Orion and the Pleiades in which the whale and turtle are shown, but not the fish, *kouper*.

In Pl. 157D the T-shaped design (the constellation of Orion) is the canoe of the men, *Tjirilpan*, and the dots the men in the canoe; *b*, the rectangle below it, is the canoe of the wives of the *Tjirilpan*, the dots representing the women and the stars the two fish, *kouper*, and a turtle. The long design on the right is a whale, *morokundja*, from Cape Arnhem.[20] The cross-hatched areas to the left represent the waves which swamped the canoe, and that to the right, the wake of the whale.

The Scorpion

The aboriginal constellation of the scorpion is contained in the constellation of Lupus, the wolf. Lupus is situated near the tail of the European constellation of Scorpio.

Plate 157E illustrates the aboriginal star group of the scorpion in Lupus. The dots inside the main design, which is a highly conventionalized form of a scorpion, indicate the smaller stars within the main constellation.

The Magellan Clouds

The Magellan Clouds are believed to be the homes of two sisters, each of whom has a dog. The elder sister, *Nujai*, with her dog, *widji-git*, lives in the greater Magellan Cloud; the younger sister, *Narai*, with her dog, *gurai-gurai*, in the lesser Magellan Cloud. During the middle of the dry season the elder sister, *Nujai*, leaves the younger because at one time *Narai* went into the bush to defecate, but instead gave birth to three children. During the wet season, however, the younger sister persuades *Nujai* to return so that they can go out together gathering yams.[21]

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19. Almost certainly the hump-backed whale (*Megaptera australis*) which frequents these waters.

20. Bark painting of whale, Pl. 106D.

21. At Yirrkalla, only the lesser Magellan Cloud is visible in the evening sky during most of the dry season (April to September). Both 'clouds' can be seen during the 'wet'. This accounts for the belief that the elder sister leaves the younger during the dry season.

ASTRONOMY

Plate 156A represents the Magellan Clouds and the southern sky. In the lower portion of the central panel is the older sister, *Nujai*, with her dog, *widjigit*. The oval figure is the fire and the parallel lines are the burning logs. In the upper part of the painting are the younger sister, *Narai*, her dog, *gurai-gurai*, and her three children. The symbols of *Narai's* fire have the same meaning as those of her sister's fire.

The two women, their dogs and *Narai's* three children are stars adjacent to the Magellan Clouds, and the fires, two bright stars near by, possibly Canopus and Achernar. No explanation was given for the cross-hatched areas on either side of the central panel.

The Crocodile, the Opossum and the Ibis-men

There are two aboriginal constellations in Scorpio, the crocodile-man, *Ingalpir*, and the opossum and the ibis-men.

The constellation of the crocodile includes all the stars of Scorpio from 'the sting', i.e. Lambda and Upsilon Scorpio, to the third magnitude star, Sigma Scorpio, next but one to Antares. In the opossum and ibis constellation, Antares is the opossum-man and the two smaller stars, one on either side of Antares, Tau Scorpio and Rho Scorpio, the ibis-men. A small unidentified star near by is the camp-fire round which the three men are seated, the opossum-man blowing his wooden drone tube and the two ibis-men beating their sticks and singing.

When, in early December, the opossum and ibis constellation and the head of the crocodile constellation first showed in the morning sky, the aborigines knew that they would soon see the praus of the Malay traders who came each year, prior to their expulsion by Commonwealth law, to collect fish and trepang. The Malay traders left their own country in late November on the north-easterly winds and returned in April on the south-easterlies. The crocodile is associated in a minor way with the making of fire.

Plate 156B shows both the constellation of the crocodile and the opossum and the ibis-men. It also shows, in a rather interesting manner, the creatures themselves. In the constellation on the right of the painting the crocodile and its related stars are grouped in one design. The other constellation is differently presented. In the upper left-hand corner are four stars. The large one on the right, Antares, is the opossum-man; the two stars on the left are the ibis-men and the central white dot is the fire around which the three men are seated. On the left of the crocodile's tail, the three men are again shown seated around their fire. The opossum-man, the darker colour, is blowing his wooden trumpet; the ibis-men are beating their music sticks together and singing. These creatures are drawn for yet a third time. Near the hind leg of the crocodile is the opossum with his wooden trumpet, the nearby long rectangle. On the left-hand edge of the painting, in white, are the two birds.

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 OI17 Murngin OI17

The Sun-woman, Walo

*532 *773 ●821 The sun-woman, *Walo*,[22] lives at Turinjina, a place far away beyond the eastern horizon. She has one daughter, *Bara-baiarinja*, whose father is the mythical man *Djunkgao* (p. 270).

When the sun-woman[23] starts on her daily journey across the sky, her daughter wants to accompany her, but the mother always refuses her, because the heat of two suns in the sky would be so great that it would scorch the hair of the aborigines and might even set the country on fire. So, every morning, according to the Yirrkalla aborigines, *Walo* rises out of the sea over Cape Arnhem and with a ceremonial digging stick in each hand (similar to those used by her husband, *Djunkgao*, and his sister, *Madalait*, Pl. 134C, D) walks across the sky until she reaches Biminura, which is far away to the west.[24] As soon as *Walo* disappears beneath the western horizon she changes herself into a wallaby and, entering a long underground tunnel, hops quickly back to Turinjina so that she will be in time to start on her journey next morning. When the sun-woman sets or rises, the intense heat of her body causes the horizon and the clouds to become incandescent.

In the right-hand panel of Pl. 156F the sun-woman is rising from her camp at Turinjina, and in the left she is setting at Biminura.

The radiating lines in both panels represent the rays of the sun breaking through the clouds at sunrise or sunset, and the transverse and vertical lines, *a*, *a*, *a*, *a*, the light reflected from the crests of the waves as they break on the shore.[25] The two bars across the sun indicate the red feathered string ornaments given to her by *Djunkgao*, which she always wears round her waist and forehead when she is in the sky.

CONCLUSIONS

*773 821 171 Although the bark paintings and the related myths of the astronomy of the aborigines of Arnhem Land give us but a glimpse of the rich star lore of those people, their analysis has revealed several points of interest: the importance of the moon and the relative unimportance of the sun; the similarity of the beliefs surrounding the Milky Way, the constellations of Orion and the Pleiades, and the Magellan Clouds; the wide variation in the myths concerning the Southern

22. Berndt (1952), p. 46, states that the place of *Djangguerul* (*Djunkgao*) is the sun's place. He also records that the sun-woman had two daughters, *Barimunga* (almost certainly my *Bara-baiarinja*), who used to accompany her across the sky. But she finally sent them back, because the heat from three suns was too great for the aborigines. Waterman (1953), in a personal communication, stated that some of the Yirrkalla aborigines believe there are two suns in the sky at the same time, a man and his wife.

23. Berndt (1952), p. 82, refers to a *dua* moiety sun-woman, rising out of the sea and walking across the sky with a *manarulan ranga* (ceremonial digging stick) in each hand.

24. The Yirrkalla aborigines consider that Biminura is near Milingimbi. Berndt (1952), p. 139, records a song in which the *Djunkgao* sisters saw the sun setting behind Milingimbi.

25. When *Djunkgao* was at Bilapinja Island he noted the sunrise and the light on the breaking waves. These were the subject of a song, p. 271.

773* 821 171

Cross; and the probable existence of a simple calendar, based on the movements of the heavenly bodies.

The myth of the moon as a man appears to be both universal and the most important in aboriginal astronomy.

At Groote Eylandt, the moon did no more than abduct a woman and her children as companions, p. 484; but on the mainland of Arnhem Land there are several myths which tell of how the moon brought death to the world, whilst he himself is eternally reincarnated, p. 493, p. 488, p. 495. Spencer and Gillen[26] record a similar myth from the Aranda tribe of Central Australia. This belief, however, is not universal, for Parker[27] states that, in the Euahlayi tribe of western New South Wales, the moon brings the children to the woman, and Mountford[28] was told by the natives of the northern Flinders Ranges of South Australia that the moon was once a man who, having been coaxed into the sky by his sister's sons, had been unable to return.

The Groote Eylandt and Yirrkalla myths which link the waxing and waning of the moon with the tides are of interest. On the other hand, the sun, who is a woman, takes a minor place in aboriginal mythology. Spencer and Gillen[29] describe a sun ceremony. There are also Groote Eylandt and Yirrkalla myths of the sun, p. 481, p. 502.

Throughout the aboriginal star myths the stars in the constellation of Orion are regarded as a man or men and those of the Pleiades as a group of women. In Arnhem Land, p. 482, p. 493, p. 498, in the Wheelman tribe of Western Australia,[30] and among the aborigines of northern South Australia,[31] the Pleiades are wives and daughters of the men of Orion. In western Central Australia, the women of the Pleiades are always being pursued by the man of Orion,[32] and in Victoria[33] the Pleiades are a group of young women singing a tune, to which the men of Orion are dancing.

The myths associated with the Milky Way are usually, but not always, similar to each other. In Arnhem Land, p. 479, p. 487, p. 496, the Milky Way is a water course from which the sky people gather food. Macgraith[34] found that the Central Australian aborigines believe the Milky Way is a river which divides the sky people into two adjacent tribes. Parker[35] states that the Euahlayi tribe of New South Wales looked upon the Milky Way as a watercourse, and Howitt[36] mentions a similar belief among the aborigines of Queensland, New South Wales and northern South Australia. Smyth,[37] however, describes the Milky Way as the body of two enormous snakes which made the River Murray. The body of the snakes, however, may be a sky river.

The Magellan Clouds are always camps of sky people. At Groote Eylandt, p. 484, they are the camps of an old man and woman, and at Yirrkalla, p. 500,

26. Spencer and Gillen (1899), p. 564.
28. Mountford (1937), field notes.
30. Hassell (1934), p. 237.
32. Mountford (1940), p. 155.
34. Macgraith (1932), p. 19.
36. Howitt (1904), p. 432.
27. Parker (1905), p. 50.
29. Spencer and Gillen (1899), p. 549.
31. Mountford (1939), p. 105.
33. Smyth (1878), p. 434.
35. Parker (1905), p. 95.
37. Smyth (1878), p. 434.

3: Mountford E,-5 (1948) 1956 OI17 Murngin OI17

those of two sisters. Among the Aranda[38] the Magellan Clouds are the camps of the two evil men of whom the aborigines are afraid, but further west among the desert tribes the clouds are the camps of two spirits, one of which is a good and one an evil spirit.[39] In western New South Wales, a mother and a daughter live in the Magellan Clouds.[40]

In contrast to the widespread and similar myths of the moon, the Milky Way, the constellations of Orion and the Pleiades and of the Magellan Clouds, those belonging to the Southern Cross vary widely. At Groote Eylandt, p. 185, the stars of the Southern Cross are two fishermen and their cooking fires; at Yirrkalla, p. 196, a shark (the Pointers) chasing a stingray (the Cross) around the sky; and at Oenpelli, p. 487, a family of star-people. In western Central Australia, the Cross is the track of an eagle,[41] and in western New South Wales it is an eagle in the sky[42].

From the limited data collected on Arnhem Land astronomy, one can see in it the beginnings of a calendar, the arrival of the stars and their positions at sunrise or sunset denoting the time for certain happenings. Thus, at Groote Eylandt, p. 91, the wet season stops and the south-easterly winds start to blow when the constellation of Scorpio reaches a certain position in the evening sky; at Yirrkalla, the showing of Scorpio in the morning sky was a sign that the Malay fishermen would soon arrive to collect trepang, and when Arcturus is visible at sunrise the spike-rush, *rakia*, is ready for harvesting. There is little doubt that fuller investigation would show that the aborigines have evolved a workable calendar based on the movements of the heavenly bodies.

38. Spencer and Gillen (1899), p. 500.
39. Mountford (1948), p. 156.
40. Parker (1905), p. 97.
41. Mountford (1940), field notes.
42. Parker (1905), p. 97.

6: Berndt E-5 (1946-1947) 1951
OI17 Murngin OI17

sexual intercourse with the obvious representatives of the "Mother" enable her to fulfil her important function.

Thus, here as in the Ancient East, ritual sex-intercourse is a sacramental act in the cult of the "Great Mother", on which her potency and the survival of man and nature depend. In both regions we are in the presence of a "Mystery Religion". The precious guarded secret is only revealed to the initiated, the twice born, and that secret, that "mystery", is the continuity of life. Life, however, is no mere visible or external phenomenon. In all its forms it has a spiritual counterpart, its "shade". The Cult Mother is more than the Big Woman of the mythological period; she is eternal in the earth, and present and active in her "shade" form in every Kunapipi. The Great Snake, too, Muit or Yermalindji, is present in his symbols at the ceremony, teaching the "reborn" through the traditional words and ritual behaviour of the elders, speaking through them even as the prophet and teacher is the voice of his God. The ritual or "wood" shade, the spirit double of the initiand enters the bullroarer symbol of the Mother and with it remains in her "earth womb" until it goes to the spirit home. While the actors perform their rites to ensure the birth and rebirth of mankind and the "increase" of the Great Mother and the Great Snake as manifested in the rains and the consequent fertility of the earth, the spirit-womb of the Mother is made potent; in addition, as they represent in mime the behaviour of animals, reptiles, birds and insects, the "shades" of these creatures perform the increase ceremonies of their own kind in their own ritual places in the spirit-sphere. Finally, the women who have co-operated in the Kunapipi with their "outside" calls, responses, songs and dance (like the Bundami or Awalambi), and who then take part in the ritual intercourse with men from the Mother Place, become bearers of the latters' ritual or Kunapipi "shades"; at least, such is the doctrine in the Roper River region.

So life is assured to man and nature for it is eternal in the spirit world, in the Great Mother who brings forth and whose impregnating symbol is the Great Snake, the iridescent rainbow which never fails to join the sky to the earth.

Such is the appeal of the cult. Its function in the social and economic life of a food-gathering people in a tropical environment can be studied, and indeed is obvious and logical. A most valuable attempt to analyse the North-East Arnhem Land cults from this point of view has already been made by Professor W. L. Warner in *A Black Civilization*. But why should such a Fertility Goddess cult arise in Arnhem Land and the Victoria River region, and not also in the northern part of the Kimberley Division or in Cape York Peninsula, where the tropical seasons and conditions of living for a parasitic food-gathering people are similar? The answer probably lies in the differences in external contacts. Here it is sufficient to say

7: Berndt E-5 (1946-1950) 1952
OI17 Murngin OI17

Significance of the Djanggawul

The younger Sister is usually called Miralaidj, Malalait or Mandalaidj, which means the 'younger' green-backed turtle called *dirri*. She is also called Djurdjunga, 'clouds coming up', or Balmabalma, which means a 'sacred shade' used on the ritual *naru* ground; this latter has the 'inside' name Mal'marangu.

In the north-eastern Arnhem Land version these three are accompanied by Bralbral (or Barabara), who stands in relationship to them as *waridj* or *wari*, a mother's mother's brother's son's son. He has no other name, and appears only at the beginning of the myth and the song cycle.

Although these three principal Ancestral Beings are brother and sisters, one version of this story tells that the Brother Djanggawul had in the beginning only one Sister, Bildjiwuraroiju and that it was through his incestuous intercourse with her that Miralaidj was born. Miralaidj did not, however, call Bildjiwuraroiju and her brother mother and father: instead she called them respectively elder sister and brother. That is, 'one Sister came out from the big Sister; and this younger one called the other one sister because she came out first, long before Bildjiwuraroiju gave birth to the children who are said to be the direct ancestors of the Aborigines living to-day'. But Djanggawul had coitus with the younger Sister who actually, according to this version, is his own daughter. This incestuous behaviour is nothing unusual, for in the myth the Brother often has coitus with his two Sisters. To all intents and purposes, Bildjiwuraroiju and Miralaidj are treated as Sisters.

These Beings came from a far distant country, and on the way to the Arnhem Land mainland stopped at Bralgu, the *dua* moiety island of the dead. Bralgu is a mythical place, but some native informants say that it may perhaps be an island near Mornington (one of the Wellesley Islands in the Gulf of Carpentaria), or alternatively an island off the Cape York Peninsula.[1] To-day its geographical position remains unclarified, and it is still the Home of the Eternal Spirits, the spirits of departed ancestors as well as of those Beings who were there when the Djanggawul themselves visited the island. It is said, too, that the Djanggawul possessed at that time a far greater number of sacred objects, but because they had only a bark canoe to get to the Australian mainland they were obliged to leave many behind.

The ultimate origin of the Djanggawul is now shrouded in antiquity, and it is fruitless to hypothesize. They are said, however, to be closely associated with the Sun. One myth tells that the Sun,

[1] Or, at Milingimbi, said to be near Mapoon Mission station off Cape York Peninsula. This place was suggested by informants who were attempting to place Bralgu in relation to some known site, indicating that it was somewhere in that direction.

Significance of the Djanggawul

a woman, possessed two daughters who were later to become the Djanggawul Sisters. But while the Yirrkalla myth and song cycle do not refer directly to them as Sun daughters, many symbolic references are made to the sun and to its warmth; in fact, the whole concept of the myth, with the growth of human beings and trees, and so on, depends on the presence of the Sun, through the agency of the Two Sisters. In the Milingimbi version this aspect is treated in great detail, if somewhat symbolically; one is left in no doubt as to who the two Sisters really were, and their affinity with the Sun. For example, the feathered strings from the *lindaridj* parakeet which they carried were symbolic of the sun's rays; they travelled from east to west, as the sun itself travels, and from their vulvae the sun's rays spread, while to-day one name for the disc of the midday sun is *dagu*, *gunbai* or *dala*, meaning the Djanggawul Sisters' vulvae or vaginae.

There is little doubt, then, that the Sisters, if not the Brother, are projections of the Sun. If they are not Sun Goddesses themselves, they are closely linked with the Sun. The question of whether or not it is legitimate to describe certain Aboriginal Ancestral Beings as gods and goddesses raises, of course, a number of problems. Nevertheless, these particular Ancestral Beings are themselves divine in that they possess creative abilities, and are sacred in the full sense of the word. From this point of view, the appellation 'god' or 'goddess' is in order; but by using it we do not in any way imply that these Aboriginal Ancestral Beings, or the sacred emblems they brought with them, are worshipped in the Christian sense. The concept of 'worshipping' is far removed from conventional Aboriginal religious thought: things or Beings are held in reverence, or even in awe, but never worshipped in the way that we understand the term. Our choice of a title for these Beings, however, endowed as they are with all the attributes which go to form the idea of Godhead, is primarily a matter of terminology.

These Beings brought with them to the Arnhem Land coast a variety of sacred emblems, which are material symbols of their cult. First and foremost was the *ngainmara* mat, alternatively called *murahmgul*, *dalwuldalwul* or *wagulwagul*; the latter term applies particularly to the mat's 'mouth' or opening. *Ngainmara* is a secular term, with *nania* as another alternative. This mat is the symbolic uterus of either Sister, but it may also mean the whale, or simply a mat. Its attributes were so sacred, representing as it did the Uteri of the Djanggawul, that it is no longer endowed with ritual value; it has passed generally into the society, and is used primarily by women. That is to say, its sacredness was of such intensity that it could not be kept for use in ceremonies alone, but became an

7: Berndt E-5 (1946-1950) 1952
OI17 Murngin OI17

Chapter Six

COMMENTS ON PART ONE OF THE SONGS

THIS first section of the saga introduces us to the Djanggawul and their companion Bralbral, and sets the stage for succeeding parts. It purports to show their immediate origin, and tells how the sacred *rangga* emblems and the mat were brought to the Arnhem Land coast.

The Djanggawul leave the Spirit Land of Bralgu, and paddle across to Port Bradshaw in their bark canoe. They are guided by the rays of the Morning Star, and in the light from this they see various creatures; it is only in the final songs (21–4) that the Star light gives place to that of the sun. In these colourful songs, the north-eastern Arnhem Landers suggest that the Djanggawul have travelled all the way from Bralgu in a kind of twilight, but as they reach the mainland the sun arises, warming them and illuminating various sacred sites (Song 24). This implies, subtly, their association with the sun.

Song 24 treats the sun as a separate identity, although we have seen (in Chapters 2 and 3) that there is, in fact, a close association, if not complete identification. Line 20, Song 24 speaks of 'Its red glow . . . from the sacred parakeet feathers . . .' This refers to the red glow below the sun, seen as it rises. It is said that the sun is a *dua* moiety woman, and this glow is from her waist-band of human hair string (*ngadiba*) into which are woven red breast feathers from the *lindaridj* parakeet. They were given her by the Djanggawul Brother himself, and when in the sky she always wears this belt. The Djanggawul Brother calls her *gadu* (that is, daughter, man speaking), although in other versions the Brother may call her *ngandi* 'mother', for the Sun Woman's two daughters may be

Comments on Part One of the Songs

539 identified with the Djanggawul Sisters (*vide* Chapters 2 and 3).
776 The red parakeet feathered string is a material representation of the sun's rays, which it symbolizes when attached as a pendant to a *rangga*, and spread out like the rays; the red feathers are said to represent the heat of the sun. The Sun Woman not only wears
[82] the feathered waist-band; she also travels across the sky with the aid of the *manwulan rangga* (see Song 24, line 3), which she uses as walking sticks, and to which are attached feathered pendants. Identification of these red parakeet feathers with the sun's rays extends throughout the cycle. It symbolizes the concept of fertility, for the small red breast feathers are said to be like children, each individual feather being a 'child'; and they represent the warmth necessary for natural increase to take place.

539 Lines 26 and 27 of the same song (24) express this idea—'Rays like the parakeet-feathered string of our *rangga*! Feathered string like our child! Red glow of the sun. Rays warming our backs, like feathered string! Like feathered *rangga*!' That is, the parakeet-feathered strings are attached to the *djuda rangga* pole and likened to (or identified with) the rays of the sun. The sun is said to 'carry the *djuda* (tree) *rangga* always, as if carrying a baby.' This reference expresses the underlying theme of the Djanggawul doctrine. The *rangga* object is regarded as a child, and is here called *wagu* (that is, *guliwona wagun*—*vide* text), which is the term used for sister's child (man speaking), or own child (woman speaking). That is to say, the Djanggawul Brother is calling the *rangga wagu*, the child of either Sister, Miralaidj or Bildjiwuraroiju; and they call the *rangga* by the same term. The *rangga* are carried in the *ngainmara* mat, symbolically the uterus of either Sister. They are the Djanggawul's children, by virtue of their presence in the wombs of the Sisters (that is, *rangga* kept in the *ngainmara*): *rangga* approximate children or people (see previous chapters). The *djuda rangga* are sacred poles, from which spring living trees: the association of the sun with these (that is, their feathered strings, likened to sun's rays) suggests how essential the sun is to the growth of trees and foliage. When the sun extends its rays to various sacred sites, lighting up the whole country of north-eastern Arnhem Land (see Song 24) it leaves its material substance at Elcho Island, crystallized in the form of red ochre (line 36). It extends as far as the western tribes on the boundary of the north-eastern-north-central Arnhem Land cultural bloc (lines 37–8), to country on the mainland behind Milingimbi, in the Barara *matu* ('Seagull' linguistic group) of the Bara *mala* ('North-west wind' clan), covering territory known as Burulmura. It reaches out, lighting up and warming all the places through which the Djanggawul are later to travel.

10: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1958
OI17 Murngin OI17

159 I called to Mahkarolla, "What shall we do?" He said nothing. He did
152 not so much as glance back. I called his name. He paid no attention. I wondered if he were sulking. This seemed unlike him, but most Murngin occasionally sulk and I wondered if he might feel that I had brought him into this very dangerous situation and blame me for it. With the foolish hope that it might be possible for us to get back to safety, I yelled again and asked if it were necessary for us to go on. He ignored me. After several more futile attempts to get his attention and some profane comment I subsided. There was complete silence in the boat.

Hours went by. Everyone remained quiet. I felt isolated and alone. The sun had gone down behind a bank of red clouds. In many of the Murngin
[821] ceremonies red clouds are a symbol of the end of things. The sea had turned blood red, ugly and morbid.

159 Darkness came, and with the night the waves quieted and the wind lessened. About midnight we came to a desert island lying a few hundred yards off the shore. The island was formed like a semicircular hill with one small beach at the bend. We saw a campfire on the beach and were afraid to land because the coastal and bush peoples had been fighting. Marauding bands from the interior had been coming down to the coastal country. We drew closer and discovered the party to be Murngin—the other canoe had landed safely.

Everything I had with me was soaked through except my camera and photographic material which, fortunately, were in waterproof bags. Mahkarolla and I with the others sat by the fire to dry and warm ourselves.
152 We dried out enough tobacco to have a smoke. Mahkarolla turned to me
159 and then said, "I am very sorry I did not answer you when you called to
123 me, Bungawa. I could not because I was crying too much. I was afraid you were going to lose your life. I thought those waves were going to tip our canoe over and you would die. I am very sorry."

I tried to answer him. All my words seemed inadequate. However, even in my shame I knew he understood my feelings because he had once said that when white men swore they did not mean what they said. After we had had some food and what little water was left in my canteen we hovered around the fire and went to sleep.

When I left the Murngin country I took the mission lugger from the Crocodile Islands to Port Darwin to get the boat to Sydney. Mahkarolla came with me. I had to wait ten days for the boat and during this time he and I were together a good part of each day. When the boat came in Mahkarolla helped me aboard with my luggage and scientific equipment. Then my white friends in Darwin came aboard for a farewell whiskey and

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
O117 Murngin O117

MEDICINE-MEN AND MAGIC

Faith-healing depends on an appeal to stars, water-spouts or Ancestors. If a man is wounded or ill he may appeal or 'sing' for help to a water-spout, for this is the only tangible link between the earth and the sky. If the appeal is successful, the water-spout sends a beam of light to shine on the sick man, and the light indicates that the water-spout has persuaded the man's ancestors to heal him. Ancestors later come in a dream and promise restoration, whereupon the man wakes up and says: 'I shall get better.' 755 821 [787]

An appeal may be made to a falling star, or 'larrpan', which sends a cool mist or fog over the patient to revive him, or if the star shoots through the sky and leaves a red trail it signifies that an Ancestor is on his way to heal the sufferer.

It may happen that a sick man is near his horde's totemic well; if so, he jumps into it and asks the mythical Snake to heal him. Though he cannot see the spirit of the Serpent, it comes out of hiding to lick him and restore him. If this totemic well is a long way off, a symbolical well may be scooped in the sand so that the sufferer can stand in it while water or sand is poured over him. His friends sit near by, singing the mythical story of Creation and calling on the Serpent for help. 755 [778]

15;Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
O117 Murngin O117

BLACK MAGIC

Our pedal-radio had broken down, and Mau and four other men took an urgent message for me to Milingimbi, a hundred and fifty miles away. It seemed that whilst he was there he was seduced by a married woman who came to his camp at night and told him to prepare the canoe whilst she collected the paddles. They made their get-away with no one the wiser, but next morning footprints and the missing canoe told the story. Two months later Mau and the woman came ashore at Yirrkala, and in the subsequent disputes and negotiations by the husband to regain his wife, Mau's horde stood firm, and Mau kept the woman. I was told that I had misinterpreted the incident, and that the woman had no active part in the elopement, for Mau had cast a Nyirrah spell over her, and her apparent enticement had all the time been inspired and controlled by him.

All rain is attributed to human agency, and heavy storms are invariably claimed by some wily magician. Distant clouds often lead to the casual remark that a horde living many miles in that direction is making rain. When I asked why they did not make rain to fall in the dry season, to cool the burning atmosphere and to make the yams grow, I was told that it is never made at that time of the year because they want the grass to die so that they can hunt kangaroos and emus. To my suggestion that regular showers would help the station garden crops, they replied that the garden did not need rain when the irrigation plant was pumping thousands of gallons over it.

Actual rain-making is a simple matter, but it depends entirely on the will and discretion of the magician. By one method, he kills a snake, and leaves it till putrefaction sets in before hanging it in a tree. He takes the spirit of this reptile, sings his instructions to it, and sends it into the sky to make rain. Thunder accompanying the storm is the voice of the growling snake, and lightning flashes are his flickering tongue. Wind preceding the rain is due to the snake rolling

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
O117 Murngin O117

821 825 789 the clouds together and pushing the wind before them in the way that water spreads out before a rolling stone. As he labours the snake weeps copiously and his tears fall as rain. If a snake is not available for rain-making, a bundle of grass may be tied together and submerged in a waterhole. Instructions are sung to this before its immersion, whereupon [776] the great Spirit who made the world and at times revealed himself through the mythical serpent, assumes the functions of the missing earthly reptile and sends the rain.

In west Arnhem Land another mythological serpent [184] sends rain in response to aboriginal wizardry. He shows himself as the rainbow, and thunder is the rumbling of his body as he turns over to urinate in the form of rain. To impress his admirers with his strength, Umbij hits two stones together till they flash fiery lightning.

821 789 888 If an old man is offended at some slight in the wet season he will threaten to send a storm. All day Munju had been mumbling and scowling at the door of his shelter, but his temper improved considerably toward sundown as nimbus clouds gathered to the accompaniment of distant thunder. That night a fierce tropical storm swept over the island, trees were struck by lightning, thunder crashed, and the wind howled as it levelled trees and shelters. In the sparkling stillness of the following dawn, the sun rose over a subdued camp, where Munju's honour had been vindicated, and he accepted the homage of his contemporaries. Also in the stormy wet season I heard a noisy termagant at Yirrkala [302] [578] objecting to young women cutting their hair, and when they persisted she threatened to call up a storm. That night we had heavy rain and a strong wind, and next day old Bamaja's exploit was referred to in subdued tones. Like most rain-makers she was aged, and having lived in the open air for sixty years with no other shelter than a sheet of bark, she knew her weather and could make a fairly accurate forecast.

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
OI17 Murngin OI17

BLACK MAGIC

There are no direct methods for stopping a storm, and it is taken for granted that the rain continues as long as the rain-maker wills it. If fine weather is desired it is necessary to intimidate the rain-maker. During protracted stormy weather I developed acute appendicitis, and as the wireless transmitter had been shattered by lightning, we were unable to get medical assistance till five Yulengor, including Mau, volunteered to make a hazardous open-sea trip to the nearest pedal-wireless station one hundred and fifty miles away. Day after day the storms and high seas continued and the canoe was hardly expected to get through. From the time the boys left till the flying doctor arrived, Jirring, who was particularly attached to me, sat by his camp-fire significantly grinding his axe and muttering threats against the misguided rain-maker who had not only manufactured the storms, but now obstinately allowed them to continue.

Another kind of magic belongs to certain localities and it is necessary to perform certain rites at these magic-centres. An old gnarled tree in the Wessel Islands shelters the spirits of octopuses, and peculiar rock formations near Cotton Island are also octopus-spirit centres. If a nomad wishes to harm another he visits either site and instructs a spirit-octopus to enter the victim's body, in an invisible form, or to change into a fish which the victim will catch and eat to his destruction. Two men from Arnhem Bay were killed in the course of a long feud, so their mother went to an octopus centre and sent a spirit to spoil her enemies. She told the octopus-spirit to travel into enemy territory and there change into a large shell-back turtle, to float near the shore, and to remain inactive till caught and eaten: 'And when they eat you, you kill them,' she said. About that time the unfortunate enemy chanced to harpoon an outsize turtle near Port Bradshaw, and ate all they could, without paying attention to the poison glands. Within a few hours

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
OI17 Murngin OI17

551 the distinction, and when I forgot the new name and used the old one she remained naïvely silent till correctly addressed.

775 Appropriate names are given to wandering ghosts, though 'mali', 'morquoi' and 'warru' are the most comon. Mali [192] and morquoi are also used for reflections in water or in a mirror, and warru is applied to any shade or shadow. Ghosts roam at will, hunting and fishing, gathering yams and cooking them; strange events, unaccountable fires, a falling tree, and unrecognizable footprints can all be attributed to mali. At times a mali deserts a skeleton and hovers round a mother's camp, and should she find that her food has disappeared, she is happy in the belief that her dead child's shadow came to her when hungry.

'Birrimbirr' is the second spirit found in every individual. [194] Birrimbirr come from the spirit world of Buralkor, and at death relatives urge them to return there. Irrespective of the life lived on earth, birrimbirr return to Buralkor, and good and bad spirits live there in hordes as they do on earth.

[196] Buralkor lies beyond the rising sun and is the home of the Great Spirit who sent out the first creative Ancestresses. ●[821] The sun comes from the spirit land and goes back again each night to suckle her infant. On its flight to Buralkor a spirit first sees a cloud rising from the sea and later it resolves itself into a dense jungle with every leaf holding a sparkling dewdrop. On approaching the trees, the birrimbirr finds an opening, and a plover guides it through the branches to the camp of its horde's spirits, where it is welcomed and it settles down to a happy life of hunting. Birrimbirr are able to see what is taking place on earth, and from time to time they hear earthly relatives calling for help and for them to go and pilot in another spirit.

765 With both mali and birrimbirr safely disposed of, the bones are smeared with red-ochre, and involved totemic symbols

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
OI17 Murngin OI17

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Creation Myths—Out of the Dawn

*773 [791] As with most primitive people, the story of Creation is of the utmost importance to the aboriginal. Everything he says and does, from the songs he sings to the way he catches and cooks his food, is determined by the way it was done by his mythical creators. A striking similarity links aboriginal creation stories with the myths of all primitive peoples, even to the inclusion of a supernatural serpent. One Arnhem Land snake went so far as to eat two of the ancestral agents; today he is the most important living link with the spirit world. His voice is thunder, and lightning flashes from his tongue. [821]

Legends in east Arnhem Land say that these mythical Ancestors came from 'over the sea' and 'beyond the dawn'; hordes in the west believe that their creative agents came from beyond the sunset.

776 *773 Junkgowa, or creative Ancestresses, came from the spirit-world of Buralkor. Wangarr is the Great Spirit of Buralkor, and though vague and indefinite in form and purpose, he long ago expressed himself through semi-human Junkgowa-agents, and continues to reveal himself in any unusual happening, such as an eclipse, an earth tremor, or a cyclone. [821] Junkgowa created important food-producing areas, unusual rock formations, peculiar water-holes and springs, which are links with the spirit-world. [778]

Stories of creation vary greatly, for in east Arnhem Land the Junkgowa travelled some three hundred miles up and down amongst a group of three dozen hordes, and now each horde jealously preserves a detailed account of what [184]

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
O117 Murngin O117

took place in its own particular territory. Yet the essentials of the story agree to an astonishing extent, considering that there is no written language and that details must be passed on orally or in ochre-painted pictures. By far the biggest variation concerns the Junkgowa's sex, for in the east, where they landed, it is said that they were male and female, but half-way across the social group it is maintained that they were sisters. 776 773* 184

Before leaving the spirit-world the Junkgowa created the sea so that they could travel in their long-nosed canoe, which was paddled in much the same way as their human descendants learnt to paddle theirs, and they made light of their toil by improvising songs. First they sang about their paddles, and this 'paddle song' is preserved as a chorus in an important ceremony recording Junkgowa songs and tales of their deeds. Waves rose for the first time, so they sang about them, and also about turtle, dugong, sharks, deep sea fish, and a porpoise that guided them on their way. A sea-gull that followed the canoe, and at times rested on it, is also immortalized in song. 773* 533

But singing alone could not do away with their toil and fatigue, and the Junkgowa became so hot that they called up the cool south-east monsoon, which rose in the spirit-land, and has blown steadily for at least five months in every succeeding year. With the breeze behind them they hoisted a sail, and after several nights and days they made a landfall. Near the shore the sea was too rough for safe landing, so the Junkgowa stopped the wind and thereby introduced the calm that now follows the south-east monsoon and precedes the north-west monsoon. Presumably they did not allow for a treacherous 'ninth' wave that over-turned the canoe, and this incident is authenticated by a long black rock that rose out of the waves to mark the scene of the accident and to enshrine the lesser-spirit of the canoe. Yulengor point out the rock to their sons to this day. 773* 821 773* 798

*773 779 power of the men's ceremonial singing and dancing, and after the manner of women they were compelled to block their ears, to hide their faces and to run from the place. With unholy glee my informants recounted the rout of the Junkgowa Women, and added that they consoled themselves by saying: 'No matter, let the men keep the totems.' And men have guarded them ever since.

*773 776 Having outstayed their usefulness at Yaure-Yaurngor, the Ancestresses were relieved to hear the beating of distant clap-sticks, and traced them to Elcho Island. They came to the western end of Cadell Strait, and seeing plenty of fish they tried to catch them, but only succeeded in injuring their hands. Until this time their hands were webbed and without fingers, but as they chased the fish and repeatedly struck their hands on the rocks the skin was broken and fingers were formed.

*773 779 [778] Elcho Island is an important totem centre in Arnhem Land, where self-created totems were in existence before the Junkgowa arrived. One of the peculiarly shaped totem-rocks embodies the mali of the 'shout' in the great Ngara ceremony. Others contain the mali of yam sticks, crabs, and palm mats. As these totems were being evolved they were attacked by swarms of sandflies and forced to retreat along the beach, till finally they wriggled into the sand for protection, and now only small parts of them project above the surface.

The Ancestresses made a long sand-bar totem, that they might cross to the island and endow it with the mali of their [778] clap-sticks. On a nearby reef they dropped two large rocks to enshrine their own lesser-spirits. Another sun-totem was [789 782] made on the beach, and like the one near Arnhem Bay it is beaten after heavy rain. In support of the custom, one of my guides remarked: 'Yes, Ngulprei's mother beat it last wet season to make the ground dry so she could go for yams *773 at the other end of the island.' By the side of the sun-totem

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
OII7 Murngin OII7

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

Sun and Morning Star

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BEFORE the Junkgowa left the spirit world they made the sun to guide them through the primordial darkness and gave her countless legs, or rays, by which she was to make her daily journey across the sky. The Junkgowa left before dawn in their canoe, and after travelling for some hours, looked back to see if the sun had risen to follow them, but they saw no more than her glow behind the skyline. They called her several times, but she made no response, till they took their clap-sticks and 'sang' their magic on her. This forced her out of the sea and she slowly followed them. The Junkgowa again instructed the sun to walk above the earth and show Yulengor where to look for food: 'You are the great light and this is your work.' They noticed then that she carried a double-pointed digging-stick and had a dilly-bag hanging from her head, and upon inquiring the meaning of the hunting equipment, they learned that a son had been born to her after they had left the spirit world. She also said that the child had made her reluctant to commence the journey.

Unlike the sun, her child had no limbs or rays, for the Junkgowa were not present at his birth to complete his creation. So he remains in Buralkor and 'sits like a stone waiting for his mother'. She returns every night to breast-feed him, otherwise she would for ever wander in the sky, lighting and warming the earth. This motherly anxiety to get back to her child accounts for the sun's tropical haste in dropping into the west and leaving behind sudden darkness. Coleridge's apt remark, 'With one stride comes the

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
O117 Murngin O117

dark', is illustrated every day in Arnhem Land, for there is no twilight; twenty to thirty minutes after sunset it is too dark to read ordinary newsprint, and within ninety minutes it is as dark as at any time during the night.

Once out of sight in the west the sun abruptly changes her course and travels northwards before going east along a well-worn track below the rim of the horizon. This is her short-cut to the spirit world and her waiting child. When the Junkgowa gave the Yulengor all this information, they also said that if ever men looked on the sun-child they would die, and now it is accepted that the sun was made for the earth, but that her child belongs to the dimly lit spirit world.

The night is long and tiresome to nomads; they chafe at the sun's tardiness in rising every morning, and they try to console themselves with the knowledge that she is preparing her own totemic food. They say: 'The baby cries often, and asks her not to leave him.' Except in big camps, and during ceremonies, the nomadic family reclines round the fire soon after sunset and usually everyone is asleep by 9 p.m. It is well known that when sleeping in the open one tends to waken early, and allowing the nomad six hours' sleep at night in addition to that obtained during the heat of the day, he will wake before daylight. Some of them are invariably sitting up and talking long before sunrise, and in the early dawn it is a common sight to see families grouped disconsolately round the embers of their night fires, watching and waiting for the sun.

Bunumbirr, the Morning Star, stays with the sun-child to keep him company in the daytime. By sunset the star is awake and makes ready to leave, but as the sun comes home about this time he waits for a time and talks to her as she prepares her food. Bunumbirr's work is to commence the new day, and shortly after midnight he leaves the sun-family and travels slowly earthwards, throwing off the covers of darkness and heralding the sun's coming to waiting

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
O117 Murngin O117

Yulengor. He is a welcome messenger of light. A rope is attached to Bunumbirr's waist, and he unwinds it as he comes out of Buralkor so that when the sun-child has been fed and his mother is about to leave he can conveniently haul on the rope and draw the star back to keep him company. Bunumbirr always meets the sun on her way out, and he disappears from the sky as she is about to break over the horizon. 773* 821●

In Creation days the Junkgowa made a man and two women and sent them out to commence a horde-family in the sky. They are still grouped there by the side of Canthus.

During the wet season the stars converge, and it is said then that the husband has made a big shelter for himself and his wives. Such an arrangement is due primarily to the machinations of the elder sister, who regularly gives birth to a child at the end of the year and coerces the young wife to care for her and hunt for the family's food, but when the rains are finished she sends her off again to camp by herself: 'You make your camp over there, because I want this shelter for my husband and child.'

This horde-family of the heavens lives as naturally as do Yulengor. By day the women forage for swamp rush-corms, water-lilies, and cycad nuts, and at night sing and dance by the fire. Occasionally when the starlight seems to change into a red glow it is said that the husband is playing on his drone pipe and that the women are dancing. On still nights the women can be heard calling their cats: 'Jai . . . r, Jai . . . r, Ch, Ch, Ch!' on much the same cooeeing notes that Yulengo women now use when calling their dogs. Unfortunately the family in the sky has no dogs, though no reason is given for this absence of the otherwise ubiquitous dingo. [231]

'Jurrpan' is the Evening Star, and a long time ago he was an ordinary nomad living with his family on the eastern

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
OI17 Murngin OI17

shores of Arnhem Bay, the father of a strong horde, fearing no one. He was a mighty hunter and sometimes hunted far into the west. His family revered him and so vied for his favours that he was able to retire from the strenuous life of hunting. Jurrpan thought on many things as he sat in idleness by his fire. He knew that he had been wise in building up his horde till it was stronger than any other, he had the respect of all who knew him, yet he was far from satisfied. One night, restlessly waiting for the dawn, he saw the Morning Star rise over the hills to prepare the new day, and suddenly he knew what he wanted. He determined to leave the earth, climb into the western sky and there make his body glow like the Morning Star.

At that time the horde was camped by a lagoon, so Jurrpan disappeared when his sons and their wives were food-gathering. On their return at sundown they called and searched for the old man, but when they could not find his tracks leading away from the camp, they suspected that he had been spirited off by evil magic. One conjecture followed another, till they saw a brilliant star shining in the west, and from it heard the voice of Jurrpan calling them: 'I am camping up here now. I'm finished with the earth and shall stay here and make my body glow like Bunumbirr' (the Morning Star).

'But what will we do? Can't we come up there with you?'

On this point Jurrpan was adamant: 'No,' he said, 'I want you to change yourselves into a new food and live in the swamp near my old camp.'

Jurrpan's word had always been law, and now in spite of the confusion that spread through the camp no one thought of rebelling. They did as they were told and changed themselves into the well-known 'rarkai', or swamp rush-corm. Rarkai is a favourite food and spreads over great areas of swamp in the wet season, ripening after the water evaporates.

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
O117 Murngin O117

SUN AND MORNING STAR

Late in the year women gather the corms, and at sunset they can see Jurrpan in the western sky shining down on his ripening swamp-children.

The Milky Way Galaxy is a wide river and was made by the creative Ancestresses before they came to the earth. Strong winds blow over it and whip up white-crested waves, thereby accounting for its peculiar diffused light. Two brothers once came to this Barduru River and planned to cross it. Wawa, the elder brother, said: 'We will need a strong canoe to carry us. Let us go back into the bush till we find a tree with a good sheet of bark.' Yuku Yuku, the younger brother, offered to cut the paddles; he felled a soft-wood tree and made them like those now used by nomads, except that they were extremely thin and pliable. Nevertheless they were effective and the canoe travelled rapidly.

By the time the brothers were half-way across the river the sun set and a wind swept down from the hills and lashed the waves till they filled the canoe. Jumping overboard, after the manner of modern Yulendor, the men tried to empty their canoe by rocking it from side to side, but wind and waves in the darkness compelled them to abandon it, and they struck out for the shore.

Yuku Yuku was wearing several tightly woven string armbands, and it is easy to imagine the inconvenience they caused him once they became wet and began to shrink. After a time he fell behind his brother, and as his arms stiffened, he gasped: 'I cannot keep afloat any longer.'

'Throw your armbands away.'

'I have tried, but they are too tight.'

And he sank.

Wawa did not hear the last remark, but when he looked back and failed to see his brother he returned to search for him. He swam about and called for a long time, yet not till he felt his own strength ebbing did he abandon the

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
O117 Murngin O117

search and make for the shore. Within a few yards of it he also collapsed and sank.

Two days after the heavenly brothers sank in the Milky Way, another member of their horde found their tracks on the river bank and saw the place where they had made a canoe. On the beach he found a paddle and, when the remains of a canoe floated toward him, he had no difficulty in reconstructing the tragedy. A day later his worst fears were confirmed when Wawa's body was washed ashore. The hunter returned to his horde with the doleful news, and that night everyone sang, wailed and performed the purification ceremony to drive off the ghosts of the dead men. But when they went to sleep, Wawa's and Yuku Yuku's ghosts stole into the camp and spoke to the sleeping horde, so that they imagined they were dreaming: 'We have had a lot of trouble. Our canoe sank and we were drowned.' Wawa then took up the tale and told the horde that whenever they looked into the night sky they would see the great Barduru River: 'You will see our dark heads in the river. Yuku Yuku is near a bright star in the middle of it, and my spirit dwells near the shore where I sank.'

Such tragedies are not infrequent in aboriginal life. Canoes without exception leak badly but nomads risk their lives in any sort of dug-out so long as paper-bark can be rammed into the cracks with a thumbnail. During the time I was in the north at least one canoe fatality occurred every two years, and canoes frequently foundered in the waves. The most recent of these events occurred when seven or eight men and boys left for an island a few miles off-shore; a wind rose at nightfall and no trace has since been found of the men or their canoe.

Two brothers from Yirrkala were turtle-hunting in an old, cracked and waterlogged canoe, which sank under them. They were then three miles off-shore and tried to swim to a barren sandy island two miles away, but one man was a

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
O117 Murngin O117

cripple and soon weakened. He told his brother that he could not go any farther, and calmly preparing to go down he gave away his one and only valuable possession: 'When you get ashore, you can have my tomahawk,' he said. With the usual aboriginal courage, loyalty, and determination, the older man returned to his brother, and by keeping him afloat, and making use of tide and waves, they were washed ashore in an exhausted state on the sandy island, where they remained three days without water or shade. At the end of that time they made a smoke-fire from a wood-drill and drift-wood, and they were rescued by friends from the mainland, who came to see why the brothers were camping on the island.

We were walking along one of the open-sea beaches when an old man told me the tale of the nautilus shell. He said in effect: 'We call it a moon-shell.' I asked what it had to do with the moon, and was told that the old moon dies once a month and throws this, his skeleton, into the sea. The moon dies, and after the lapse of a few days his spirit is reincarnated and appears as a new moon. I began to understand then why a nomad on seeing a new moon joyfully shouts the news to the camp. Men, women, and children rejoice together as over the return of a long-absent friend.

A long time ago a man camped beside a lagoon in the mountains. Life had dealt kindly with him, but in spite of his pleasant surroundings and good food supply he wanted to live in the sky. At night the Evening Star tantalizingly twinkled in the rippling lagoon, till the man could stand it no longer, so he climbed into the sky. His plan had been carefully thought out: 'I will live with the stars and outshine them till I am an old man, and when I die I will put my spirit in a new body.'

'Ngalindi' goes through this cycle every lunar month, and

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
OI17 Murngin OI17

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his body grows from infancy to prime of life, at full moon, and declines to old age and death, all in the space of four weeks. He drops his old skeleton into the sea and we know it as the nautilus shell. The lunar cycle is recommenced by Ngalindi's production of a new infant body for himself—the new moon.

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Anthropomorphic conceptions of mythical ancestors, the sun, the moon, and the stars, are so highly developed in aboriginal folk-lore, that apart from a few supernatural powers the characters might be ordinary Yulengor. I asked if all the stars were men and women, and if the sky were populated in the same way as the earth, and I was told that no one knows; it is thought that, though the heavenly bodies once had physical form, they have now become spiritual beings clothed in light, and there are many of them that have not yet been seen.

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'Guwak' is the general name given to the black pied magpie, ordinarily known as 'mudlark' or 'pee-wee'. They are said to roost among the stars. Nomads believe that they feed on the earth and fly into the sky after sunset. Originally the Guwak were three men made by the Junkgowa and sent out to prepare ceremonial grounds for unborn hordes in Blue Mud Bay and Arnhem Bay. Immediately they had completed their preparations they returned to the Junkgowa with a strange request: 'We have finished our work and now we wish to roam over the earth and fly into the sky.'

'Well,' said the Junkgowa, 'you can come with us as we go into the west.'

'No, we want to be free to fly about and please ourselves. We don't want to walk any more. Our work is finished and we want to fly and see other places.'

The Junkgowa suggested a change of work: 'If you want to see other places, you can go west and make new horde-territories for us.'

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
O117 Murngin O117

'No. We made three horde-territories. We don't want to walk; we want to fly, we want wings.' 773* 825

Yet another problem was raised by the Junkgowa: 'If you have wings and live like birds, what will you eat?'

But the Guwak were prepared for this: 'We will live on cashew fruit, seeing that no one else eats it.'

Finally the Junkgowa gave way and changed them into birds, and made it possible for them to eat the wild cashew fruit. Because the birds are reputed to have eaten this fruit prior to their present-day diet of insects and snails, Yulengor will not eat the birds. On calm nights the isolated cries of the Guwak can occasionally be heard, and it is said that they are singing as they fly amongst the stars. [262]

Some time after the Junkgowa began the work of creation, they were followed from the spirit world by two canoes loaded with birds and animals. Mythical beings, now known as 'Julpan', were in charge of the canoes, and they tried to follow the course taken by the Junkgowa to Port Bradshaw. But 'because they could not see the tracks left by the Junkgowa canoes in the water' they missed the course and sighted land thirty miles north of their objective. A high sea was running at the time, and they had little choice in selecting a good landing, so they tried to go ashore on the western side of Cape Arnhem, but both canoes were swamped in the surf. All the fish, dugong, turtle, and sea-snakes remained in the water; the animals and reptiles swam ashore, wandered wherever it pleased them, and set about propagating their species. Of the birds that flew ashore, some went into the hills and jungles, and others stayed on the coast, each according to its fancy, and there they are found today.

Having fulfilled their mission, the Julpan wondered what next they should do. One suggested leaving the earth: 'Let us go into the sky and camp among the stars,' he said. 773* 821 ●

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
OI17 Murngin OI17

As the idea was generally popular, they went into the sky, and there they can be seen today as the Pleaides. Next morning the leader outlined a plan for the future: 'Let us cut two new canoes. The men will go in one and the women will hunt for our food from the other.' And from that time forth, women have hunted by themselves and gathered vegetable foods, shellfish, and small animals, and the men, less frequently and according to their inclinations, have gone on their spectacular quests for kangaroo, emu, dugong, turtle, and fish. Furthermore, the Julpan decreed that this same division of labour should apply on earth, and for that reason women have always been the principal food-gatherers in aboriginal society.